



# Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward



Youth Edition

Issue 26

October 2015

## Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly.

The youth edition of Journeys in the Spirit provides a range of ideas to use with 12–18 year olds in a Quaker context. It offers activities for one-off sessions or weekends and comes out three times a year. Some suggestions are made about age suitability. Timings are not stated, as this will depend on the group and how the activities are used. Each issue explores a theme.

Journeys in the Spirit is offered with the intention of providing an opportunity for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit. There are four directions to our spiritual journey: inwards to ourselves; outwards to others; upwards (or is it further inwards?) towards the deeper mystery; downwards to the world we live in.

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### The theme for this issue

In the three years 2015, 2016 and 2017 Britain Year Meeting is considering the theme 'Living out our faith in the world'. The three Yearly Meetings during this time will be exploring this and seeking to discern how Quaker faith might lead us to act within the context of today's culture and society. This focus over three years seeks to identify what might be the most effective approaches for Quakers individually and cooperatively to bring about changes in the world.

This material offers some ways to encourage young people to undertake this thinking too. While we undoubtedly live in a world that is unjust, it is hard for us all to know what we might do about this. In the old testament of the Bible, the prophet Micah called for people to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with their God. The activities that follow set out to enable young people to consider justice within the context of mercy and humility.

### Using the material

These activities are designed to be used over a weekend or a longer event for young people, with these "themed" sessions interspersed with other activities and free time. They could also be used for one-off sessions or a series over many weeks.

The material can be used as several consecutive sessions for the whole group or run in parallel with participants choosing between different activities that are undertaken in small groups or individually. Try to include at least one activity from each of the different points so that different learning styles are catered for.



# Gathering Points

## Pass the generosity parcel

Wrap a packet of sharable sweets in multiple layers of wrapping paper. Between each layer place an individually-wrapped sweet. Play pass the parcel. When the music stops, the person holding the parcel unwraps one layer of paper. They must give away the sweet they find and say something positive to the person receiving it. When the last layer of paper is removed, the person who wins the packet of sweets must give two to each person around the circle, with the instruction they can each keep one and must give one away.

At the end ask how people felt giving the sweet away rather than keeping it for themselves. How did it feel to receive a sweet? How did it feel to hear the positive comments too?

## Micah 6:8

Ask how many of the group read the Old Testament of the Bible? Probably not many, if any. This includes a set of books written by prophets, these are the writings of people who had messages from God for the nation of Israel about how people should be. One such prophet was Micah. Ask people to put aside their feelings about the Bible and hear some words attributed to Micah. Read: *'And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'* (Bible: New International Version, Micah 6:8). After a pause read this again.

Outline how this introduces three ideas: acting justly, which is about doing what is right as equitably as possible; loving mercy, which is about delighting in being kind to others; and walking humbly, which suggests something about the way we live and act without pride. Justice, mercy and humility: ask how people understand these words. If they were a prophet today giving a message to our society about the way we should be, what would this be? Justice, mercy and humility seems to be a message right for our time. Link this with BYM's three year focus on 'living out our faith in the world'.

Show the group copies of some images of Micah 6:8 that you can find under Gathering Points 'Micah 6:8' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth). In small groups or individually give people the opportunity to create their own poster to promote *doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly*. Have some large sheets of paper available and a range of art materials. Afterwards those who want might want to talk about their creation and there could be a place to display them for those that would like this.

## Quotations (more suitable for older teenagers)

At Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) 2015 the participants (15 – 18 year olds) explored the theme "*How do we, as Quakers, respond to injustice*"? At the end of the event they were asked to share what they had learnt in relation to the theme. Display the JYM participant's responses around the room, you can find these under Gathering Points 'Quotations' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).

Invite the group to take time to read these quotations, after a few moments ask the group to reflect on the following questions:

- Which quotation resonates with you?
- Which quotation raises questions for you?
- Which quotation challenges you?
- Did any quotations prompt you to think differently about justice? Which one? Why?

Discuss their thoughts all together or in smaller groups.



## Starting Points

### Fact or fiction quiz

This activity focuses on poverty in the UK. There are a number of ways of measuring poverty but the most widely accepted definition for poverty in the UK is that someone is poor when they have an income below 60% of the median of the UK population. Children experience poverty when their families do not have enough income to meet their basic needs. Ask the questions that can be found under Starting Points 'Fact or Fiction quiz' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth). Suggest that people stand one side of the room if they think the answer is 'fact' and the other if they think it is 'fiction'. Share the answers as you go through. After going through all the questions ask what surprised the group about this. Then ask them how they feel about the UK in the light of this.

### Poverty in the UK (more suitable for older teenagers)

Outline some of the statistics and information that you can find under Starting Points 'Poverty in the UK' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth). Then draw a tree on a large piece of paper. Invite the group to suggest things that cause poverty and write them on the roots of the tree. Then invite suggestions about the effects of poverty and write these on the branches of the tree. Then around the tree write suggestions of some actions that might be taken to prevent poverty. Discuss with the group why it is so hard for us to take these actions.



## Reflection Points

### When I need a neighbour, are you there? (more suitable for older teenagers)

Hand out copies of the reading that you can find under Reflection Points 'When I need a neighbour, are you there?' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth). Give individuals time to read this and when they have done so ask them to get into twos and threes to discuss together their reaction to what they have read. Then bring people back together and discuss:

- How can we be there for those who are hungry, lonely, in prison, poor or sick?
- How does the challenge to do so link with our understanding of ourselves as Quakers?

### Change makers

Ask each individual in the group to think of someone who has campaigned for justice – ask them to write this on a post it note and stick it on a flip chart. It doesn't matter if the same name is repeated. As a group have a look at the names – why did each individual choose them, what was important to them about this person? In what ways did this individual live out humility and mercy in their campaign for justice? For stories of 67 change makers go to <http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whatson/festivals-series/festival-of-love>. You can develop this activity using the information and reflective questions you can find under Reflection Points 'Change makers' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).

**Gifts:** You will find an additional activity exploring fairness under Reflection Points 'Gifts' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).



## Listening points

### Standing in the safety zone

Read this account to the group or ask a young person to read it:

On the first day of Occupy at St Paul's in London I was one of the last two people sitting in Paternoster Square – the original target of Occupy. Everybody had left to be at a large gathering in front of St Pauls or in response to notices threatening legal action if anybody tried to occupy, demonstrate or otherwise misbehave in the Square. I decided to quietly hold the space for a while. I was joined by a photographer using an old 'movie' camera. I made myself still, breathing slowly, as if getting ready for meeting for worship. It was a big, open yet enclosed space. Security guards came up and asked, 'have you read the signs'? I replied: 'Yes and I am just in a meeting for worship and prayer' – they went away. After 20 minutes I left and joined the other meeting.

Later, as police lines formed to 'kettle' the demonstration I stood, with others, in front of the police lines. Again, I inwardly paused, centered and moved my anger to one side. Even more than in the Square I felt a physical calm; I closed my eyes – I felt oddly safe. I felt courage and, if necessary, immovable. It wasn't an angry feeling at all but rather a feeling of kindness and strength at the same time. I was reminded of this when I heard the song 'Standing in the safety zone'. It had been chosen as a desert island disc by an American lawyer.

Here are three versions of the song. Choose which one you prefer to play or show to young people: <http://tinyurl.com/o7aedb2> <http://tinyurl.com/omcbho3> <http://tinyurl.com/o6cg5zx>

Before playing (or showing) one of these, say to the group that some of the words in the song are from a different Christian tradition than Quakers. Encourage them to listen beyond the language.

After listening to the song pose the following questions for discussion in small groups or with the whole group together:

- What do you think about the song and the singing?
- What feelings do you have about the song?
- What do you understand when the singers sing about the safety zone?
- Do you have a safety zone? How does it relate, do you think, to justice, mercy or humility?

### Quaker support for Ekta Parishad and Janadesh in south India – a campaign of the landless

Read the account to the group (or ask a young person to read it) that you can find under Listening Points 'Ekta Parishad' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).

After they have listened to this short account encourage the young people to have a go at the clay modelling activity that follows it. While doing so they could have a conversation about where they think justice, mercy and humility are within the account that they have heard.

### The great picnic...a story... (suitable for younger teenagers)

Read the story to the group (or ask a young person to read it) that you can find under Listening Points 'The Great Picnic' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).

After listening to the story, ask the young people in pairs or small groups to re-write it for today. They might want to consider what the loaves and fishes might represent in today's world, where the story might be set, who would be the main characters, who would be the audience, why the hero is a child?



# Viewing Points

## Exodus film

You could watch the whole of the film *Exodus: Gods and Kings* which is a certificate 12a containing moderate violence, threat and bloody moments. Alternatively if you have an internet connection you can download the clip relevant to the discussion at <http://www.damaris.org.uk/media/exodus/>. After watching the film or the clip ask the group:

- What challenges do we face in seeking justice?
- What have you given to seek justice?
- What have you given up to seek justice?
- What have you gained from seeking justice?

## What is poverty? (more suitable for older teenagers)

Ask the group to write on a post it note, their response to the question, what is poverty? Explore with the group their thoughts about what causes poverty.

Watch the three minute film “What is Poverty?” which can be found at [www.bit.ly/rhythmspoverity](http://www.bit.ly/rhythmspoverity).

Ask the group to think about their definition of poverty and its causes. Explore with the group their response to some of the statements (see below) in the film that relates to justice, mercy and humility.

*Of course giving is essential, we give to bridge the gap.*

*Giving can become just a restatement of where the walls are; I have what you need; I am what you want to be; my superiority is your shame.*

*Alone we are too broken, too afraid to trust, too afraid to lose what we have.*

The film talks about separation being everywhere – invite the group to reflect on where there is separation in their lives. Ask them first to think about separation in relation to justice, then ask them to reflect on mercy and finally humility. You may want to pose reminders from the film, maybe by putting up the quotes: ‘*separation between communities*’, ‘*separation between me and my best intentions*’, ‘*separation between me and god*’. Ask the group to think about the walls that they build and explore as a group how they might bring down these walls.

Ask the group what *Togetherness is more than aid, togetherness is friendship, togetherness is vulnerable, togetherness costs* mean to them and how they live their life.

## Freedom writers

This film is a certificate 12 and contains strong language and moderate violence. Watch *Freedom Writers*, which is a film based on a true story and the diaries of a group of teenagers in the class of Erin Gruwell. The film is a way of looking at change and power, which are important in forming an understanding of whether people feel able to seek justice. In *Freedom Writers* the individuals share a sense of powerlessness and inability to affect change, however Erin provides a fresh perspective and hope for the students and their thoughts and feelings about their ability to influence change.

After watching the film use the reflective question and activities you can find under Viewing Points ‘Freedom Writers’ at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).



## Talking points

### What might you do?

To help young people reflect on their concerns for the world and how they might respond, do the activity found under Talking Points 'What might you do' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).

### This light that pushes me

This is an account from the Quaker Peace and Social Witness East Africa programme. It is about a woman called Mama Zepreta from Kenya (Mama Zepreta means she is the mother of Zepreta her first son). She had been married for 30 years but her husband only lived with her for 10 of those years. Her husband sold her farm and land without telling her. The people in her village and Quakers helped her to move back and get her home back.

You can find pictures and short narratives about her struggle and victory under Talking Points 'The light that pushes me' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth). After looking at these, discuss together where justice, mercy and humility might be found in her story. Ask the young people to explore what they might have done in this situation and how difficult this might have been for them. Why do they think that this story is part of an exhibition and publication called '*This light that pushes me*'?

### Forgiveness project

Marina Cantacuzino is the founder of '*The Forgiveness Project*'. This has many powerful stories about people who have been in and through challenging and difficult times and yet have struggled for reconciliation, forgiveness and an end to conflict. Go to <http://theforgivenessproject.com/stories/> to look at this. Choose some stories to tell the young people. Invite reflections on these and how they might link to justice, mercy or humility. Ask what they think and feel about the stories. Explore with them their views on the acts of forgiveness or reconciliation.



## Action points

### Simulation

A simulation is an activity which creates a space and experience for people to engage with their thoughts and feelings in relation to an issue. This simulation explores power and what it is like to use it and what it is like when you don't have power. A simulation consists of an activity and a debriefing (which is essential to the learning). This activity will work best as a single session, you will need to split the group in two beforehand and ensure that you have the necessary resources. Details on how to organise and facilitate this activity can be found under Action Points 'Simulation' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).

**Acting for justice:** You will find an additional activity exploring what actions we might take to combat injustice under Reflection Points 'Acting for justice' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).



## Worship points

### Justice, Mercy and Humility

Details of this activity can be found under Worship Points 'Justice, mercy and humility' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth). For this activity you will need to set up some stations. Stick up the instructions for participants next to each station, in addition you will need:

- A tray with sand and a polythene sheet
- A bowl of water and some stones
- Sheets of paper and coloured pencils and some pens (for two stations, plus some scissors for one of these stations)
- Some Duplo blocks or Lego blocks

Have a time with the gentle music playing for the young people to go to each of the different stations, in silence in any order they wish, spending as long as they want reflecting on the activity they find there. When they have been to all the stations they should return to their seat in the whole group space. Conclude this session in a circle and asking participants to lay down the hands they have created (from one of the stations) sharing as they do this what their hope is.

### Franciscan blessing

During a time of worship read the following slowly, with silences in between each 'blessing':

May God bless you with discomfort: discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships; so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger: anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people; so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears: tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and violence; so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.

May God bless you with foolishness: enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world; so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.



## Ending Points

### So what will you do?

In 2012 Junior Yearly Meeting considered the theme 'Bearing witness to bring about a just and compassionate society' this was based on Advices and Queries 33. Show the power point which can be found under Ending Points 'Bearing witness' at [www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth](http://www.quaker.org.uk/resources-youth).

You might want to play the following songs in the background:

- *Get Up Stand Up* (by Bob Marley or the version by 'Playing for Change' which can be found at [http://bit.ly/stand\\_up4](http://bit.ly/stand_up4) )
- *Stand up* by Sugarland which can be found at [http://bit.ly/stand\\_up\\_sugarland](http://bit.ly/stand_up_sugarland)
- *A Dream* by Common, Will.i.am and Martin Luther King <http://bit.ly/ihaveadreamfw>

## Review

Ask the young people for their views on the sessions you have done to explore justice, mercy and humility. Seek their feedback on:

- What they have learnt
- How this has increased their understanding of the Quaker way
- What they will do as a result of this
- What else they wish to explore now

Discuss with the others that you have worked with on these sessions, exploring what has gone well and what you might do differently another time.

Think about how you, or the young people, might report their considerations to the wider meeting. How might the young people take their concerns to Quakers locally or across the area meeting?

## Additional resources & links

Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network  
[www.qarn.org.uk/](http://www.qarn.org.uk/)

Community reconciliation and building peace to replace conflict <https://stethelburgas.org>

Non-violent power for social change  
[www.turning-the-tide.org](http://www.turning-the-tide.org)

The Forgiveness Project  
<http://theforgivenessproject.com>

Modern day slavery and human trafficking  
<http://hopeforjustice.org/>

A Christian charity passionate about ending poverty [www.tearfund.org/](http://www.tearfund.org/)

A Christian expression of advocacy, friendship and practical support for the peoples of the Middle East [www.micah6-8.org.uk/](http://www.micah6-8.org.uk/)

Protecting human rights worldwide  
[www.amnesty.org/en/](http://www.amnesty.org/en/)

Christian Aid [www.christianaidcollective.org/](http://www.christianaidcollective.org/)

## Links to other organisations

Christian Aid:  
mpower resource for young people  
[www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk)

Cafod Youth Topics:  
monthly activities on world issues  
[www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk)

Youth Work magazine:  
a monthly Christian youth work publication  
[www.youthwork.co.uk](http://www.youthwork.co.uk)

Russell House Publishing:  
resources for working with young people  
[www.russellhouse.co.uk](http://www.russellhouse.co.uk)

Oxfam:  
resources for youth work on global issues  
[www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet)

Leaveners:  
Quaker performing arts project  
[www.leaveners.org](http://www.leaveners.org)

## This issue

This issue of *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth Edition was written by Cat Waitbaka, Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden.

## Next issue

The next issue of *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth Edition will be based around the film *The unseen march* which explores the growing tide of militarism in school, it will be sent out on 8 February 2016.



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