

# Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Issue 38

April 2010

Children



## Luke Cock – the butcher who didn't cheat

“Journeys in the Spirit” offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people. This children’s work edition of “Journeys in the Spirit” comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children aged 4 –12 years in a Quaker setting. It 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.

Included are sections on: **getting ready**, for those co-ordinating the programme; **gather**, meeting, centering, focusing; **engage**, beginning to think about the theme; **respond**, activities linked to the theme; **reflect**, ending appropriately; and **review**, evaluating what has happened. To offer a balanced session you should aim to do something from each section. Some of the activities are included on additional sheets. Timings or ages are not stated, as this will depend on the group and how the guidance and activities are used.

Underpinning each issue is the idea that there are four directions to our spiritual journey. **Inwards** to ourselves; **outwards** to others; **upwards** (or even further inwards) towards the deeper mystery; **downwards** to the world we live in.



The twelfth in the series exploring our Quaker stories May 2009 - September 2010

### Getting ready

“We’se all be ruined: what, is thee ganging stark mad to follow t’silly Quakers?”

These are the words of the wife of Luke Cock in the late seventeenth century not long after Quakers began. Luke was a butcher. He was born in 1657. He was not from a Quaker family; he wasn’t a merchant, a landowner or middle class. He was a noted singer of irreverent songs (*see sidebar for a link to a website of downloadable Yorkshire songs*). He was a Quaker by conviction – not an easy thing in the late 1600’s. On his faith journey he described four challenges – he talked of these as coming from his Guide. This Guide first asked Luke to stop cheating; then it asked him to talk truthfully (plainly); then it asked him to stop paying money or giving things to the Church that he didn’t belong to and then, finally, his Guide asked Luke to let God be his helper, like a Hand guiding him always. *Read Luke’s sermon – Quaker Faith and Practice details in sidebar.*

These were tough leadings to follow. Each could have brought ruin, ridicule, despair or even madness. He never pretended it was easy – in his sermon, when he was 64, he said he asked his Guide for some rest at the roadside on his journey. Maybe he can help us when we are in the thick of the ordinary struggle.

Whilst Luke was a convinced Quaker his faith and imagery were rooted in Christianity. He talked of following the ‘weeping cross’. ‘Weeping crosses’ were also real objects or places of prayer and penitence (*see picture on page 3*). We may need to set aside or dig beneath our own ‘Notions’ about or experience of the Christian Church to hear and share with children something of Luke’s Quaker faith and practice. The wider church is near Easter - there is a chance here to explore what it might mean – for ourselves and others.

Underpinning references and resources

Quaker Faith and Practice 20.22 – Luke Cock’s sermon

Yorkshire folk song: [www.yorkshirefolksong.net/song\\_database/all.aspx](http://www.yorkshirefolksong.net/song_database/all.aspx)

Our intention is to assist children on their spiritual journey – this can mean encouraging thinking and discerning of a questioning, philosophical kind in areas where we may not always feel comfortable.

# Gather

## A two names game

Depending on the number of people in your group, sit, or stand in a circle, triangle or pair. After a few moments quiet and stillness play a game. Have a bean bag or a soft ball ready – be aware of those who may need help catching or throwing. Say that in a moment you are going to gently throw or roll the ball or bag to someone and she or he has to say their name and something that they like to do. That person then throws or rolls the ball or bag to someone else who repeats the activity. This goes on until everybody has had a go. Now repeat the activity but this time invite everybody to say a name that they would like to have – it can link to a person or to something in nature; anything can be chosen. On *Sheet 38.A* there is a badge activity as a follow on to this Gather exercise.



When we say our name we are telling the truth – when we say a name we would like to have we are saying something else true about ourselves. Say something like, 'We are going to hear about a man called Luke Cock. He found it hard to tell the truth. He lived a long time ago when Quakers first started. He wasn't famous. He was a butcher. He sold meat for people to eat. Before he was a Quaker he cheated and told lies about the meat he sold to people. He wanted to be different and not tell lies but it was very hard. His wife was also scared because when he lied he got more money – if he stopped lying maybe they would be poor? Let's find out some more about him.'

# Engage

**A simple story about Luke.** On *Sheet 38.A* there is a story about Luke. When you talk about the things that his Guide asked him to do, say each one a bit louder so that it sounds like they became more difficult each time. The idea of a Guide or voice may be less problematic for children than you might think. At the bottom of *Sheet 38.A* there are some wondering questions to encourage conversation and reflection. You can add in some of the other details from Luke's sermon if you are working with older children. See sidebar on Page 1.



Luke talked about his Guide taking him, in his mind or imagination, to a crossroads. Here there were four paths for him to go down – one at a time – each one harder than the other.

## References

**Quaker Faith and Practice 10.01:** Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand.  
**Isaac Penington 1667**

**Quaker Faith and Practice, Advices and Queries 1.02.11:**

Be honest with yourself. What unpalatable truths might you be evading? When you recognise your shortcomings, do not let that discourage you. In worship together we can find the assurance of God's love and the strength to go on with renewed courage.

### Bible:

Paul's Letter to the Philippians Ch.2 v.1-4.

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

# Respond

After telling the simple story about Luke (see Engage) go onto any of the following ideas:



**The story of Jesus and the tax collector – Zaccheus.** The tax collector cheated – this is a story about his acceptance and change.

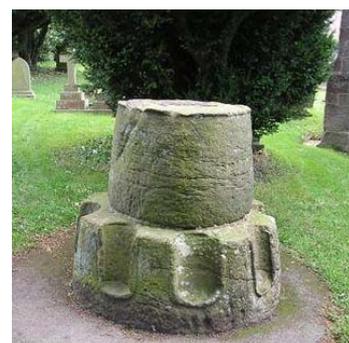
If you have attended a Godly Play workshop you can borrow this set from the Quaker Life Children and Young People's Team in Friends House. Go to [www.quaker.org.uk/cyp](http://www.quaker.org.uk/cyp) and click on Resources and then Godly Play.

For information about booking a workshop use the same internet address as above and click on Training Opportunities; alternatively get in touch with the Children and Young People's Team using the contact details on the back page of this issue.

## The Bible:

See **Luke** 2:1-7, **Matthew** 8:23-27 and **Matthew** 27:32-38. for the Bible stories linked to those of the three trees.

- **If you had a Guide what would it be like?** Start by saying something like, 'Luke told us about something, like a voice inside that he listened to. I wonder, if you had a Guide or a voice like that what might it be like? If it had a shape what shape might it be? If it had colour what colour might it be? If it had a name what name might it have? What is it like?' Just listen with no assumption that anybody or everybody will speak. Have an array of good quality art materials that children can go on to use if they would like to. Just say, after any conversation, that the materials are there to be used to do whatever they chose.
- **Who tells lies?** Simply ask a question like, 'I wonder, what it is like when somebody tells you a lie?' You might also ask, 'I wonder, what is it like to tell a lie? – I wonder has anybody ever done that.' (Say that people don't have to say if they don't want to). You could give an example for yourself to help things along. Have ready some blown up round balloons and black, thick ended felt pens. Talk a bit about what different faces you might have if you lied or were lied to – what might it feel like? Ask everybody, maybe with some help if younger, to carefully draw one face on side of the balloon and one on the other. Show each other what has been done.
- **Luke's butchers shop - a little play.** On *Sheet 38.B* there is a script for a role play about Luke, his wife and his shop. Younger children can be helped by older ones and you can have lots of customers – just vary the meat that is bought.
- **The 'Weeping cross'.** Easter is the toughest of stories. Luke knew it and felt it. For Luke and many Quakers Easter was real – they suffered greatly for being Quakers at that time. The killing of Jesus by the Romans was horrible. For all of Jesus' friends and some of the Romans it was also very, very, very sad. Because it was so sad people would go to special crosses like the one in the picture here – the cross is gone from the top, it is very old. People would bring their sad stories or their problems or talk about things they had done wrong. The holes in the stone at the bottom are where people put their knees, knelt down, when they prayed and brought their sad stories. Perhaps, for Luke, the weeping cross was a picture in his mind that made him think about his problems and sadness and that helped him.  
  
In the past Quakers have knelt in Meetings to pray – it still happens in Meetings today. Lots of people in other faiths kneel down in worship. As a way of connecting with Luke's experience ask children to kneel carefully and quietly – just to try it. Suggest they think of something sad or lovely. After a few minutes everybody sits again. Ask what that was like? How were their knees? How did it feel? What did they think of – if they want to say?
- **The three trees.** A story about three trees as may have been used in parts of the story of Jesus – his birth, the storm on the Sea of Galilee and his death. This could help older children reflect on the story as a whole. *For the story see Sheet 38.D; for activity ideas see Sheet 38.E; for Bible references see the side bar on this page.*



## Reflect

### Luke's crossroads.

See *Sheet 38.F* for an example of a simple shape that you will need for this part of your session – a crossroads with four directions; you will also need a plain wooden or toy figure. Say something like, 'At the end of our session today let's think a little bit about Luke and the four things he was asked to do. He talked about them like they were four roads.' Placing the figure in the middle, say something like, 'Lets imagine he is here – this road was about not cheating [1]; this road [2] was about telling the truth; this one [3] was about not giving money and things to a church he wasn't in; this one [4] was about letting what he called God be his guide.' As you say this move the figure. Bring him back to the centre. Say something like, 'Just put your hand on your heart or your tummy – that's like your centre, your middle. Now let's just be still for a little bit together.'

## Review

The review can happen at the time or later – it maybe by yourself or with others. Some useful questions for the use of volunteers to look back over and learn from the session include:

Have children been able to participate in their own way? What went well and why? Has each child been able to reflect, even a little, on something about her or his thoughts and feelings about the content of this session? What is there for you to learn from this session? What might you do differently another time?

## Topical activity

### Britain Yearly Meeting 2010 - celebrating our work

Have prepared some big heart shapes on a mixture of white and coloured paper. Have lots of arts and collage materials including glue and scissors and glue brushes. Have a conversation about the Yearly Meeting in May. Say that one of the things that people of all ages will be doing is celebrating what we love about our Meetings. Ask everybody what they like or love about coming to Meeting. Then lay out the big hearts and say to people that they can decorate the heart to show the things that they or others like or love about their Meeting or being with Quakers. They could be displayed as a celebration of your Meeting.



## Links to other organisations and resources

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/ideas> - a place both to find and to share ideas that have worked with children in a Quaker context.

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/quakercentre> - the Quaker Centre has a great selection of borrowable resources to help with all sorts of aspects of Quaker life.

### This issue was written by Chris Nickolay and edited by Howard Nurden

The next children's issue of *Journeys in the Spirit*, issue 39, is about the Quaker Tapestry (available from May 3<sup>rd</sup>); issue 40 is about Luke Howard – he named the clouds (available from June 1<sup>st</sup>); issue 41 is about Pilgrimage (available from July 1<sup>st</sup>).

### All age worship:

"I thought to have had a watering (unity in the spirit – shared baptism): but ye struggle so I cannot get you together. We mun have no watering tonight, I mun leave you every yan to his own Guide."

*These words were part of Luke's sermon in York. It can be helpful at times to remember that finding unity amongst Friends on anything, like all age worship for example, is not always easy.*

A simple session for all age worship would be to have a child read out the story on *Sheet 38.A*. This could be followed by somebody else, another child perhaps, reading Luke's sermon - *Quaker Faith and Practice 20.22*. The activity, 'If you had a Guide what would it be like' could be done in quiet time followed by silent worship and sharing in 'after-word'.

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