



# Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition Issue 56 October 2011



## Lucretia Mott – working hard for fairness

### Getting ready

This issue of the children's work edition of *Journeys in the Spirit* looks at the life of Lucretia Mott. She was an American Quaker 1793 -1880 who was committed to living her faith in action and was very important in campaigns about the slave trade, the rights of Native Americans, education and women's rights.

Her commitment to the issues in the nineteenth century is of historical interest but her energy and persistence are very relevant today. We know a lot about Lucretia, her ideas and activities through the observations of those who worked with her and also from a large collection of letters exchanged between members of the Mott family.

She was born into a Quaker family in Nantucket. Her dad was a sea captain who went on long trading voyages to China. Lucretia helped her mum in a small shop selling basic supplies to help the family with money.

It is clear from her letters that her commitment to a range of causes arose from her faith and a belief in all being equal in the sight of God. This was expressed in a number of actions – some of which are included in the stories in this issue.

“Journeys in the Spirit” offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people.

This children's work edition comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with 5 –12 year olds in a Quaker setting.

It provides opportunities for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

### Gather

Welcome the children into a bright space, using chairs, cushions and colour in a circle to help them feel comfortable. When they have settled, ask them individually about something that they have done or has happened to them in the last week – encourage each child to speak and the others to listen.

After everyone has been heard, start to talk about the meaning of the word 'fair'. Explore the meaning of 'fair treatment' in the context of their lives. Ask if there is anything in their life that they think is unfair – maybe at home or at school. Can they think of a time when they have helped someone or been fair? Talk about it if anything is shared.

Think about how you can link what has been talked about to mentioning being fair in the bigger world – not treating people badly because of what they look like, their skin colour, their age, whether they are girls or boys.

Say that you are going to talk about someone called Lucretia Mott who thought that being fair was very important.

### Underpinning references

#### Advices and Queries

**33:** *'Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people?'*

**23.62:** *'the attempt to identify and apply Christian values and practices is a struggle laid on each generation'*

## Engage

Show the children a picture of Lucretia Mott – see *Additional Resource 56.A*. There is a web reference in the side bar for more information about her. In the sidebar on *Page 3* there are also contact details for the *Quaker Life Resources Centre* that has information packs about Lucretia. What do children think her life might have been like? Talk about her clothes. Have a map of the USA available to show where she was born – Nantucket, Massachusetts on the Eastern coast, her home in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and the distance between there and London. Talk about the problems of travel.

This issue has three stories from her life to show how she tried to do what she thought was right. **Story 1** is on this page. **Stories 2 and 3** are on *Additional Resource 56.C*. Read each of the stories through before choosing one. The stories are about the fair treatment of women, fair wages and fair trade. Choose and adjust the stories according to the ages of your children. Try to start a story with 'once upon a time'.

**Story 1. The fair treatment for women:** Lucretia Mott became very involved in the anti slavery movement and was very good at standing up and talking to people – she was clever and brave. It was also said that she was a warm and loving woman of great poise, but she was a very human person with a quick temper, a sharp tongue, and a stubborn streak.

At this time most people thought that women were inferior to men and should do as they were told – but Quakers tried to treat men and women as equals. Some people wouldn't want to listen to her just because she was a woman.

She travelled around, in America, talking at meetings about banning slavery. In 1840, 170 years ago, the British and Foreign Anti Slavery Society organised a big meeting in London and asked people in the United Kingdom and the USA to send people to join in. The Anti Slavery Society in America chose both men and women to go to London – this included Lucretia and her husband, James.

After a very long journey on a ship she got to London. At the big meeting she was amazed to discover that the men and women did not sit together. The men sat in the main section of the hall and the women sat upstairs. The women were not allowed to speak in the meeting. This was so different from her experience as a Quaker, where Friends were valued for their gifts whether they were women or men.

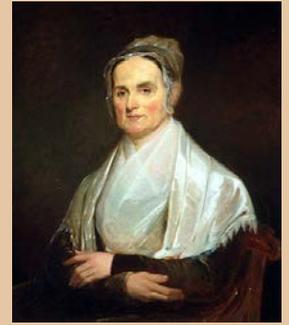
When another American delegate, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, tried to stand up to speak she was forced to sit down by some men. Lucretia realised that even though they were fighting slavery most of the men at the meeting were happy to treat women badly. See *Additional Resource 56.B* for pictures of Elizabeth and of Frederick Douglass who helped with their campaigning.

As Lucretia left the conference she met with Elizabeth. They were both very angry and upset about what had happened. As they walked home together they talked. They decided that, as well as fighting slavery, they had to try to change the way women and girls were treated.

When they got back to America Lucretia and Elizabeth worked to get lots of people together to try to change how women and girls were treated. In 1848 they had a big meeting called the Seneca Falls Convention. The Convention produced a Declaration, like a big letter or poster, which listed 18 ways in which women were treated badly and differently from men. It took lots of people a long time to make things better for women and girls. It was hard and lots of people were unkind to Lucretia and her friends but things did get better.

There are links to the Declaration in the Respond section on *Page 3*.

## References & other resources



Lucretia Mott

More about Lucretia:  
[www.gwyneddfriend.org/mott.html](http://www.gwyneddfriend.org/mott.html)

For example:

*'3 January 1793, Lucretia Coffin is born, the second child of Quakers Thomas Coffin and Anna Folger of Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, Her older sister Sarah is handicapped, and she acts as the oldest child in this family. Her mother nick-names Lucretia "Long-Tongue" as she liked to give as good as she got'*

For more information about the Seneca Convention go to:

[www.npg.si.edu/col/seneca/senfalls1.htm](http://www.npg.si.edu/col/seneca/senfalls1.htm)

The additional resources listed in the text are available at:

[www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren](http://www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren)

## References & other resources

**Quaker Life Bookshop and Resources Centre**  
0207 663 1030

Explore the women's movement with older children. An interesting story is the strike of the Bryant and May Match Girls - see [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

### Rice crispie cake recipe:

**Ingredients:** 60g/ 2 oz unsalted butter, 3 tbl. spoons golden syrup, 1 x 100g bar fairtrade milk or dark chocolate, 90g/3 oz rice crispies

**Method:** Melt the chocolate in small bursts in the microwave or in a bowl over a saucepan of simmering water; add the butter, cut into small pieces, stir in till melted; add the syrup, stir; add the rice crispies and stir in to the chocolate mix, gently spoon into 12 bun cases; leave to cool.

The additional resources listed in the text are available at: [www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren](http://www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren)

After telling one of the little stories about Lucretia you could talk with the children about how she might have felt or how her children might have felt. You could also help the process of responding to the story by asking some wondering questions:

*I wonder.... which part of this story you liked the most*  
*I wonder.... which part of this story you think is most important*  
*I wonder.... if there is part of this story that is like your life*  
*I wonder.... if there is any part of this story that you could leave out and still have all the story that you need*

## Respond

This part of the session helps children explore being fair some more.

*Resources needed include: crayons, oil pastels, colouring pencils, drawing pencils, a large scrap book, glue sticks, thick card for story boards, good quality drawing paper, scissors.*

**Story 1. The fair treatment for women.** Ask the younger children to draw one or more pictures about the story they have heard. You may have to help some children recall some details. These could be pasted into a big scrapbook that tells the story. This could be displayed for visitors to see. Ask older children to make a 'story board'. Each person can make a series of 'panels' to illustrate the story. These could help children 'tell' the story of Lucretia Mott to the adults. See *Additional Resource 56.E* for a story board template.

See *Additional Resource 56.D* for the Declaration in more child friendly language. This includes a way that you can talk with older children about it and how it could help them think about their own lives as children. See the original Declaration text at: [www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/senecafalls.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/senecafalls.asp)

**Story 2. Fair wages for everybody.** Here is a simple role play. Everybody, children and adults need to be in a group – it can be one if numbers are small.

Ask if anybody would like to pretend to be a teacher for just a little while. If possible have one girl and one boy 'teacher'. Give each 'teacher' enough pencils and paper for each person in their group. If you have just one group do the activity twice – one with the girl and one with the boy 'teacher'.

Each group sits and waits whilst you brief the 'teachers' – tell them that they have to give a pencil and paper to each person in their group. They then have to ask their group to draw a picture of a favourite animal or bird.

After a few minutes, when all have appeared to finish, the teachers collect up the pencils. You then count five pound coins into the boy's hand and just two pound coins into the girl's hand. You tell the group or groups what you have done and say the girl got less because she is a girl – just like in Lucretia's time.

After this everybody comes back together. Ask some questions - what did it feel like getting less money if you were a girl? What did it feel like getting more money if you were a boy? What did it feel like seeing someone get less money? What did you think about someone getting more money?

End this quite serious session with some play time – books, art work, games, going outside.

**Story 3. Fair trade.** Show children the Fairtrade symbol on a chocolate or other wrapper or container. Ask if anybody knows what it means? Tell the simple story on *Additional Resource 56.F*. Ask all of the wondering questions outlined above.

Make chocolate rice crispie cakes using fairtrade chocolate. Share them with everyone in Meeting. The recipe is in the sidebar – adjust it for numbers.

Have a fairtrade stall in Meeting. This could involve children in choosing items for the stall, telling Meeting about the plan, having a budget to buy things (sale or return), publicising and staffing the stall. See *Additional Resource 56.G* for ideas about how to do it. Display Lucretia's picture on the stall.

## Reflect

Return to the circle so that thoughts about the session can be shared.

Show again the picture of Lucretia Mott and ask the children what they are going to share with the adults when they go back into Meeting and one thing Lucretia Mott would be pleased to know that we are doing today.

Ask the children to hold hands in the circle and have a time of quiet. Smile to everyone and break the circle.



### Review

Reviewing the session can happen at the time or later. Some useful questions might be:

- Were we able to bring alive Lucretia's concerns?
- Which parts could we have made more interesting and how?
- Were we able to link Lucretia's thinking with the world today?
- Are we able to take some of the ideas into the life of the Meeting?

**This issue was written by Anne Bennett and edited by Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden. The Topical activity was written by Chris Nickolay.**

The next children's issue of *Journeys in the Spirit* is **Issue 57**. It is about **Bertha Bracey** a British Friend who was an organiser of Quaker relief work in Germany in the 1920s and an advocate for the support of Jewish refugees in the 1930s and will be available on November 1st.

**Issue 58** is about **Jocelyn Bell-Burnell** – scientist and Quaker and will be available on December 1<sup>st</sup>. This is the last in Series 6, '**More Quaker stories**'.

Series 7 will begin in January 2012. The theme is going to be, '**Some Bible stories**'. There will be seven issues. The first is an introduction to the theme and will include some history and thoughts and activities about how to talk about and explore these things with children.

### Materials available online are:

Current issue additional resources sheets

An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting

A simple plan for an all age Meeting for Worship

Topical activity about exploring our relationship with the Earth –a simple ritual

There is also a 'How to use *Journeys in the Spirit*' guide; a link to special issues; an archive of previous issues; a discussion forum and a link to the *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth edition.

Go to:

[www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren](http://www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren) and choose from the range of links in the sidebar.

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