

Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Issue 14 April 2008

Children



Introduction

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 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** towards God, the deeper mystery; **downwards** to the world we live in.



Sixth in the series exploring Quakers: a people of God: being and doing

What is Meeting for Worship?

Getting ready

Preparing Hearts & Minds

The amazing fact of Quaker worship? What happens? What are we doing in meeting for worship? This month we want to explore the shape of our Quaker meeting for worship - to identify the building blocks which, together, form our gathered worshipping community of both Children's and 'Big' meeting.

With you we want to explore what worship means. The story in Engage is one way in which to develop the idea of 'that of God within', or 'the Inner Light' with children. The words from Quaker Faith and Practice – in the sidebar opposite - are beautiful and compelling but the words we use with children must be our or their own, for this journey and for this time. They must also be used lightly, ideas floated, seeds sprinkled, links left open. Exploring the building blocks with which we create our Children's Meeting for Worship is a way of standing back from our 'programme' and saying 'so, what are we doing in our Children's meeting for worship?'

Sheet 14.A has a picture of a house made of 'blocks' and a description of each. In Respond and on the additional sheets there are ways to explore and have fun with what the building blocks say. You could do one or more of the blocks in a series of children's meetings - don't hurry through. Try to use it as a way to explore and engage with the whole worshipping community and dovetailing into the 'Big meeting' at the end (even if this only means the tea and biscuits). A decorated or illustrated version of the model could be put up on the wall and referred to in other sessions, shared with Friends gathered in 'Big' meeting or used in an all age meeting for worship.

Some questions for getting ready include: Is the room prepared? Do my colleagues and I feel supported and comfortable with our plans and ourselves? Have we been able to find a moment of quiet to hold the coming session in the light? Are there particular needs and situations we may need to be aware of in this session? Am I confident of the health and safety arrangements? Have I reflected on the theme? Do we have enough resources and equipment for everybody?

Underpinning information and references

In this issue going from 'Getting Ready' to 'Reflect' is in itself a process of building Meeting for Worship – it is not about Meeting, it is an invitation to explore and make Meeting.

Quaker Faith & Practice 20.3 (part): *"I came to know what I can only describe as the amazing fact of Quaker Worship....I discovered the way to the interior side of my life, at the deep centre of which I knew I was not alone, but held by a love that passes all understanding. This love was mediated to me, in the first place, by those with whom I worshipped. For my journey was not solitary, but one undertaken with my friends as we moved towards each other and together travelled inwards. Yet I know that the love that held me could not be limited to the mutual love and care we had for each other. It was a signal of transcendence that pointed beyond itself to the source of all light and love"*

Gather

Gather everybody together in a circle. Introduce the idea of building a meeting for worship and show them a big version of the building on *Sheet 14.A*. You can say - 'We have already started!'. Here is a big 'Welcome' on the door! Ask, how did we welcome you? Was the room ready? Is it warm and bright? Big meeting has flowers on the table - have we got them too? What else would be nice to make the room feel welcoming? Play a simple name game – go round the circle and ask everybody to say his or her name and favourite animal or bird.

Engage

What is meeting for worship? We have been doing a lot of getting ready for what we are going to do. What are we listening to in meeting for worship? We may be listening to a story, we may be listening to Ministry, and we may be listening to ourselves, deep down inside listening to 'That of God within us'.

- **Are we all ready** to open ourselves up and be ready to listen? We can simply say 'Now we are all ready to talk together about our meeting for Worship' and move on to some of the Respond activities or the story below may help everybody think and engage some more.

- **A story.** Here is one way of sharing 'what we are about' in our meetings for worship. It begins with trying to explain what we mean by the Inner Light, or 'that of God within us'. George Fox's understanding of the Truth came from the words of Jesus: *'There is one, even Christ Jesus who can speak to thy condition'*. You may choose to use it, or find your own way to share this experience with children. Children come from many different homes: some where there will have been talk of Quakerism, of that of God in everyone, of the Inner Light; others where there hasn't.

"It may seem a long time ago now but I am sure we all remember last Christmas, and we will all look forward to celebrating Christmas again this year. What do we celebrate at Christmas? (We celebrate the birth of a baby - baby Jesus).

He was a very special baby. The story tells us he had a mother called Mary, and he was also God's baby, God's child, or a 'Child of God'. He grew up to be a very special man who told us many wonderful things and told marvellous stories which explained how we should love and look after one another. The most important thing he told us is that we are very special, we are unique and precious, and we too are children of God. We can do special, wonderful things - we all, like him, have a bit of God inside us." After this ask some open questions like:

- 'I wonder which part of this little story you like the most?'
- 'I wonder which part of this little story you think is the most important?'
- 'I wonder if there is part of this little story that might be about you or all of us?'

- **Two other ways of thinking about this are:** George Fox talking about looking for 'that of God' in everyone. As Quakers we also call it the Inner light, a brightness inside us, a light that shows us the way. We might light a candle or make a cardboard candle of our own. The Bible (St John) speaking of God's special light as 'the light that lightest everyone who comes (is born) into the world' and 'the light that shines in darkness'. We could make a dark box with shining gold inside - a light shining in the darkness. See *Sheet 14.D 'Making a box'*.

The Respond section now takes each of our building a meeting for worship blocks in turn.



References

The Bible, Book of Revelation 3.20

'Behold, I stand at the door and knock'.

Quaker Faith and Practice 1.08 (part):

'We can worship alone, but when we join with others in expectant waiting we may discover a deeper sense of God's presence.'

The Bible:

St John Ch. 1. v 5: 'The Light shineth in darkness.'

The Bible:

St John CH. 1.v 9: 'The true light, even the light which lighteth every one coming into the world'.

Quaker Faith and Practice 2.08:

'To me, worship is recognising and communing with the divine, whether it is within myself, in others, or in the world. The precondition is my belief in worth-ship, my own and that of other people.'

References

'Our meeting for Worship held with the children, no different from 'adult' meeting: a time for being together, a part of our spiritual journey, a time of 'moving', a time of 'pushing out', a time for spiritual growth and development, carrying us forward in our lives'

Anon.

Not all the darkness in the world can put out the light of one small candle.

Anon.

I saw also that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness.

George Fox 1647

Quaker Faith and Practice Advices and Queries 1.02.1

Take heed, dear Friends to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leadings of God whose Light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life

Respond

Hearts and minds prepared building block: 'Packing our bags' – getting ready for the next day or for meeting. Have copies of the backpack on Sheet 14.B for everyone or ask people to draw their own. Some of the pockets are carefully cut open and the backpack is then stuck to another piece of paper or card. Talk about packing bags for a school day, or for a holiday. What do you need? What might you need for Meeting for Worship? What would you put in? (*Here are some ideas in case the conversation gets stuck- the Meeting House, friends, Friends, smiles, flowers, thinking about me, thinking about others, good things, bad things, stories, news we have heard, making things, squash, biscuits, garden*). Draw pictures or write things you might put into the pockets of the backpack.

Welcome building block: 'Saying: Good morning or hello' - How many different ways of saying Hello? Different languages, different customs. Walk round greeting each other. Do Eskimos really rub noses? I don't know but it might be fun to try.

See also Sheet 14.B: Welcome activities 2- 4.

Together building block: 'Play name games' - when we are together it is really nice to know each other's names. Example: a go round using initial letters: 'I am Mary, I like Muffins.' Little ones can be helped by making the sound, and choose from suggestions made by the group.

See also Sheet 14.B: Together activities 5 - 8.

Opening building block: 'Opening Hands' - Invite everyone to think of something: a person special to them; someone who needs help or support; something they are pleased or happy about; or perhaps a worry or a concern. With young children it is best to suggest one thing - perhaps a special person. Ask them to hold that thought tight in their hand and then, putting their hand in their lap and turn their hand over so their fingers are uppermost. Ask them to gradually to let go, to unfold their fingers, open their hand and give that thought into the Light, to God. We know sharing our thoughts helps - we are sharing, our thoughts to God, and, in the quiet, our hand is open to receive, and to hear the 'still small voice' inside us from God.

See also Sheet 14.C: Opening activities 9 –10.

Listening building block: 'Recognising sounds' - Animal noises, birdsong, musical instruments etc. Have a collection of different noises/sounds for a group to guess (CD or cassette tape) but it is even more engaging to be making sounds. *See Sheet 14.C: Listening activities 11 –12.*

Alongside building block: (Please see the guidance for this building block on Sheet 14.D). **'Holding a bright light up to an object'** - Find objects which superficially look rather dull and boring, a rough pebble, a closed fir cone, a fossil, a snail shell, a bit of knitting, a piece of tweed. Using a torch or with a bright lamp in the centre of the group invite the children to hold an object up to the light and see what colours and patterns they can now see. Holding things in God's brightness, valuing them and giving them worth.

See also Sheet 14.D Alongside activities 13 – 16.

Forward building block: 'Knock Knock Jokes' - What do we do with our thoughts or ideas after worship? Sometimes, perhaps when we are in a bit of a muddle or don't know quite what to do about something, we may find we slowly begin to work things out and can start to take our ideas forward. It is as if we get a bit of a nudge that takes us forwards, like a Knock! Knock!

See also Sheet 14.E Alongside activities 17 – 19

Reflection Building block: 'Lighting a candle' - Come together in a circle and talk quietly about spending a short time together in quiet, in silence, held together in God's Light. Place a candle in the centre and, lighting it, invite everyone to look round the group. The candlelight lights up all our faces, our brightness, our 'special-ness', and we are joined together in a circle of Light.

See also Sheet 14.E Reflection activity 19

Reflect

This is the final part of our meeting for worship. We draw together the threads, to 'appreciate' and 'value' what we have done and look forward to any decisions we have made about what we might do or think about in the next week. We may do this out loud and then be quiet together in our circle reflecting together in silence. If the children join the Big meeting for the final minutes their gathered reflective silence can take place in the Worshipping Community of the whole meeting. Prepare for this by explaining that they are joining the meeting group which has been having meeting just like them, only mostly in silence. You are joining them for the ending where you will all be silently reflecting on the experience of meeting. If Children's meeting for worship ends at the same time as Big meeting the Worshipping Community is the joyful gathering of the whole Meeting around the tea, coffee, squash and biscuits.

Ongoing activity

The Ongoing Activity until the May issue of 'Journeys in the Spirit' is focussing on Britain Yearly Meeting, the annual gathering of Quakers from Scotland, Wales and England. The January and February issues explored what Yearly Meeting is and its place in the lives of Quakers. The March issue, this one and that for May, offer ways to explore three main Yearly Meeting sessions and themes. This time we offer a simple activity as a way into the theme of 'Being the seeds of change'. Please see *Sheet 14.F* for thoughts and activities about this theme.

Review

We hope that anyone who has been part of a Children's meeting for Worship will recognise the blocks that build together on a Sunday morning. Sometimes it may seem a bit of a jumble! Sometimes we only get as far as the first floor - a happy, comfortable friendly group.

Reviewing what you have done 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 experience in meeting for worship? Was everybody OK with quite complex ideas? What is there for you to learn from this session? What might you do differently another time?

Links to other organisations and resources

Quaker Life Resources Room can be found via this link - www.quaker.org.uk/cyp phone and email for resources on the contact details below.

Useful books available from the Resources Room or the Quaker Bookshop:

'**A Light to walk by**' an anthology from and for Quakers of all ages, compiled by Elizabeth Alley. Excellent collection for sharing, and a very useful springboard for discussion.

'**Lighting candles in the dark**' - Friends General Conference. Stories for Children, stories of love and service, many of them about Quakers. '**All in one Room**' - Shared Worship in our all age Worshipping Community; Madeleine Harding, Mary Penny, Mina Temple.

'**Opening Doors to Quaker Worship**' - Friends General Conference. Worship, prayer, the needs of children and young people with ways to guide young and old gently into worship.

This issue was written by Mary Penny and edited by Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden. Chris Nickolay also wrote the ongoing activity.

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References

'If we light many candles and put them in one place, they give a greater light. So when we meet together for worship, there is more of the glory of God.'

Based on words of Quaker Robert Barclay.

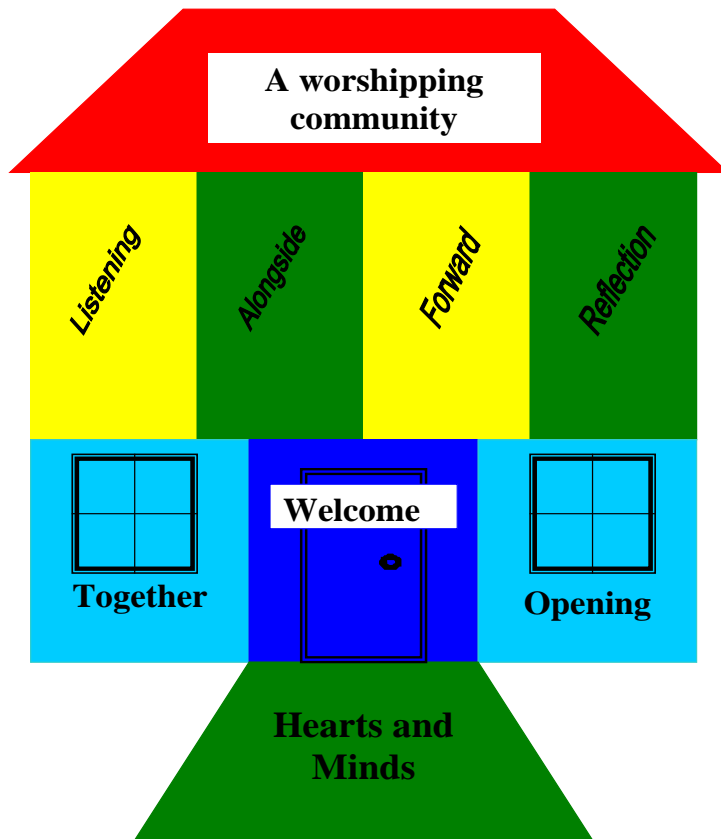
Linking with the wider meeting – Use 'Building a meeting for Worship' as a model when talking about and planning **All Age Worship** with Elders.

The next children's work issue of 'Journeys in the spirit', number 15, May 2008, will be on Britain Yearly Meeting peace work in South Africa; Issue number 16, June 2008, will be on 'Prayer'; Issue number 17, July 2008, will be on Britain Yearly Meeting work in Israel/Palestine.

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Sheet 14 .A Getting Ready The building blocks



Building a Meeting for Worship. What are the ingredients, the building blocks, the warp into which we weave our threads? This is a reflection on and description of how one person views the building blocks. Your words may be different. *"The pattern I am about to show you may be true for any meeting, whether it is Children's Meeting, All Age Shared Worship, or 'Adult' Big meeting. The only difference is the amount of 'visible' input enabling it to flow."*

- **Hearts and minds prepared.** Coming to meeting - this is an individual responsibility and in a family may be prompted by parents, perhaps with a discussion at breakfast or on the way to meeting. There may be preliminary reading or meditation, and, on occasion, a hand out given in advance as preparation for All Age Worship or for Children's Meeting. There may be no apparent preparation.
- **Welcome** - arriving, being greeted, shaking hands. Being welcomed into a welcoming space: chairs gathered in a circle, flowers on the table, lighting and heating - the Children's room is no exception.
- Looking round - recognising Friends, being **Together**, knowing one another's names, smiling. In children's meeting - sharing news, playing a game, getting to know one another, becoming a group.
- **Opening** ourselves - settling down, making ourselves ready to listen to others, and to that of God within us. This may be a stilling or centering exercise, it may be music or - 'Let's all listen to a story...'
- **Listening** - inside - to others - to a 'story'. Stories we think about and share may be our stories: about ourselves; our lives; our world or stories Jesus told, of Quakers long ago or our Quaker work and witness.
- Putting ourselves **Alongside** the story or experience, what does it mean? how does it speak to us? feeling its value or 'worth'.
- Thinking about and doing something - which takes us **Forward**, which 'grows' us. Adults may be thinking and determining. Children and adults together may be doing this through a practical, concentrating activity the story and which, in the gathered intensity of creation, brings its own ministry.
- **Reflection** and sharing - in silence, or out loud with others.
- Conclusion - if not already all together, joining main meeting for shaking hands - and tea, coffee, squash and biscuits - **a Whole Worshipping Community.**

Journeys in the Spirit

Children

Sheet 14.B

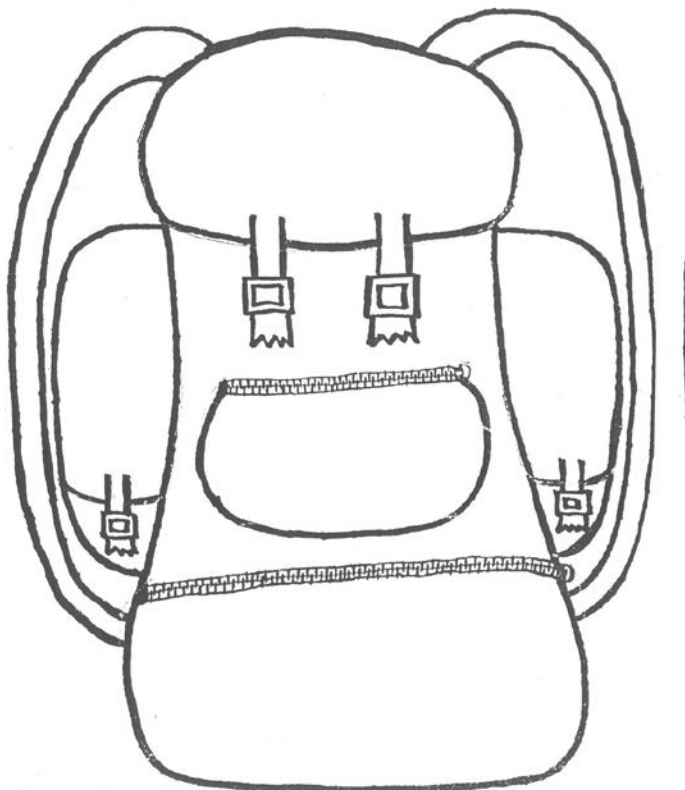
Respond

Building blocks



Hearts and minds prepared building block:

1. Packing our bags – a backpack picture to copy:



Welcome building block:

2. Make up a chant with actions

For example:

Good Morning! Good Morning! And how do you do?

Good Morning! Good Morning! I'm fine and how are you?

3. **Smiles** - A welcome without saying a word!

Pass a smile round a circle -

Very simply: turn and smile at the person next to you, they smile back and turn to smile at the person on their other side, and so on until it has gone all round the circle.

Or pass a smile to and fro across the circle until everyone has received one.

When you have received a smile pass one across the circle to someone else and hold your hands up and out to show you have received one. The person who starts it off must receive the final smile, and you can then all join hands together in a circle.

4. **Make a welcome notice** - 'Welcome to Children's Meeting for Worship' - cut out big letters or have materials for everybody to share in drawing them. Give everyone a chance to colour or make a pattern in at least one letter. Put it up in the room or hall for everyone to see.

Together building block:

5 **Creating a web** - linking everyone in the circle. Roll a well wound ball of rainbow wool from side to side of the circle, holding onto the thread when it reaches you. You might like to work out how, as a group, you can unravel and get back to a nice ball of wool.

6. **Jigsaw**: cut the **Together** building block into the number of pieces for each person in the group, write names or make drawings on each piece and then put them together on a plain 'block' to put up on the wall.

7 **Bringing everyone to meeting** - introducing each person and any toys or special things they have bought with them into the circle. (Ask everybody to bring something at an earlier meeting.).

An example is: A little boy came to meeting. He was the only child to come, and he always brought a small suitcase full of his current toys. Each week the toys were individually 'brought' to meeting and sat, or placed, round an upturned tissue box. They included cars, boats, trains (sometimes used for transport) animals, teddies and Playmobil people. These toys were his life, and they all came to meeting and took part.

8. **Working together in 2s or 3s** - make a sculpture or shape with your bodies - a car, a horse, a chair, a television, and finally as a whole group - a meeting for worship - how are we positioned? In a circle? Is this important? We are together! Or if not - why not?

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Sheet 14.C Respond Building blocks

Opening building block:

9. Opening Flowers: This is a similar experience to 'Opening Hands'. You will need plain white or coloured paper, scissors, wax crayons and a tray of water.

- Cut out squares of paper. These can be 4cm, 5cm or 6cm square. Think carefully about the size; make sure that there will be enough room in the tray for everyone's flower to open – if in doubt use the 4cm size. See the side bar for a picture of what they look like.
- The smallest fingers can do this or be helped. Fold the squares in half to make a rectangle; fold again to make a square.
- Open out the paper.
- Fold each corner into the middle – it will look like a square with four triangles on it. It is then ready to be opened out and waterproofed with wax crayon on the base. A message or a thought can be written in the middle.
- When colouring is complete ask everyone to fold in the petals around their 'thought' to make a 'bud'. One by one invite the children, in silence, to float their flower on the water in a large shallow tray (not too much water! Just enough to cover the bottom) They may like to share their 'thought' as the petals gently open to the Light, giving our thought to God.



10. Curling up in a ball and opening up

Where you are sitting curl yourself up into a small ball and then gradually uncurl and open yourself up. This might be like an animal coming out of hibernation or like a flower opening up in the warmth of the sun. In early spring you might be able to find (from other members of the Meeting?) *Iris stylosa* buds that will have opened up (in slightly warm water) by the end of Children's meeting! Pick the flowers as buds and wrap them in clingfilm.

Listening building block:

11. Shells and kitchen rolls

We are now discouraged from collecting or buying big seashells but a fond memory for many of us is that of holding a shell close to one's ear and 'listening to the Ocean!' Members of the Meeting might be able to provide a shell to pass round and share the magical roar of the sea in our ears. The fact that it is not the sea at all but the roar of our blood rushing through the blood vessels in our ears makes it even more pertinent - we are listening right inside ourselves! Kitchen roll tubes can be used as a substitute, and those with 'older' ears must be warned that this 'sea' may no longer be there for them.



12. Listening inside ourselves: the story of Samuel

Telling the story of Samuel the Temple Boy. 1 Samuel Ch.1 – 3. The special child who went to serve in the Temple and heard God calling to him in the night. This story is great fun to act and there can be a lot of little Samuels running backwards and forwards to visit Eli. Do we hear a 'voice'? Is this what we mean by 'promptings'?

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Sheet 14.D Respond Building blocks

Alongside building block:

In a meeting for worship for any ages it can help to have a visual focus. Such a focus can helpfully distract from immediate, 'chatty' thought so that other thoughts, feelings and relating can emerge. This can assist 'being alongside' others or a personal issue. Candles can be a good focus. Below are some ideas to encourage thinking about candles. The key part of this is awareness about others, a concern for the world or whatever emerges in the stillness. It can be that nothing may emerge about others. The stillness may also be uncomfortable or dry. That may be what one is alongside. Something may, of course, arise about family, school, friends, a world concern, a religious thought or an unexpected thought or image. When talking about or exploring this fundamental part of meeting for worship try to use questions or language that encourages open, experiential, wondering responses – 'I wonder what that meeting for worship was like for you?'; 'I wonder what was best about it for you?'; 'I wonder if there was anything that you liked or didn't like about it?' 'I wonder what that felt like?' There are no right or wrong answers here.

13. Talking about candles and lights

Children have candles on birthday cakes and may light candles and make Christingles at Christmas, but have little experience of darkness and life without electric lights. Stories they have heard may include times when families gathered round the precious pool of light that came from candle or lamp, or struggled in the dark with a lantern. *'In winter I get up at night and dress by yellow candlelight.'* *Child's Garden of Verses: Robert Louis Stevenson.* Talk about light and different lights, torches, lamps, floodlights, and about darkness too to understand the significance of Light and the 'infinite ocean of light and love'.



14. Making a wax candle

Candle dipping can be done with a group of children and needs careful preparation and careful supervision. The simplest thing to do to gain a sense of achievement, and have a nice candle to take home at the end is to colour dip an ordinary white kitchen candle:

Using a large coffee jar melt coloured wax (using old coloured candles, white candles with a wax crayon or two, or use special wax colouring) by standing in a large pan of simmering water. You need about 6cm of melted wax in the bottom of the jar. When it is almost time to start children's meeting take the pan from the heat and empty the water. Pack crumpled newspaper round the jar standing in the pan making sure it is quite stable. Pour boiling water from a kettle into the jar until the wax reaches 1cm from the top, then put on a table well away from the children. When you are ready to do the dipping, give each child a white candle to hold by the wick and stand them in line. Put the pan on a low table and keep hold of the handle. Each child in turn dips their candle into the wax and then goes round to the back of the line as the wax dries. There may be two or three dippings depending on how much the wax has cooled. If the first dip is just the bottom, the second half way up, and finally right to the top there will be a gradation of colour which is very attractive. It is very important that you practice this procedure at home and make sure you are completely confident.

15. Making a paper candle

Draw 'flames' on thin yellow card or cut out from yellow tissue. Cut pieces of white paper to fit round empty toilet rolls. These can be coloured and patterned before sticking them round the roll and adding the 'flame'. These could be carried into meeting and placed on the table in the centre.

16. Read a story from the book **'Lighting candles in the dark'**. See links to other resources at the end of this issue.

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Sheet 14.E Respond Building blocks

Forward building block:

17. Knock Knock Jokes

Promptings? What might that mean? Someone giving you a bit of a nudge? Or someone knocking on your door?

You might like to try some Knock! Knock! jokes? The point to remember is we need to respond!

Knock! Knock!

Who's there?

Lydia.	Lydia who?	Lydia Dustbiin
Ivor.	Ivor who?	Ivor Bignose
Norah.	Norah who?	Norah Bone
Iona.	Iona who?	Iona Pony
Justin.	Justin who?	Justin Time
Robin.	Robin who?	Robin Banks
Ivan.	Ivan who?	Ivan Email
Isabel.	Isabel who?	Isabel Necessary on a Bicycle?

When there is a knock on the door we have to get up and be ready to listen and to see if there is anything we can or should be doing.

18. What might we be like in one of the stories?

If we have been reading or telling stories we can discuss how we would have felt in a story? How would we have reacted? Can we imagine a similar situation in our lives?

Reflection building block:

19. Build a meeting poster

Give everybody a different building block from the poster. Sitting quietly ask everybody to think about the different things they have done together to build a meeting for worship. Say that if somebody wants to say what he or she has liked doing they can.



Hearts and minds prepared: Welcome: Together: Opening: Listening: Alongside: Forward: Reflection: Hearts and minds prepared: Welcome: Together: Opening: Listening: Alongside: Forward: Reflection: Hearts and minds prepared: Welcome: Together: Opening: Listening: Alongside: Forward: Reflection: Hearts and minds prepared: Welcome: Together: Opening: Listening: Alongside: Forward: Reflection:

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Sheet 14.F Ongoing activity Being Seeds of Change.

We are all so used to seeds. They are just there. They grow when they are planted - wheat for bread, vegetables, fruit, flowers, and trees. Some seeds are tiny, some are big, and some are huge. They are powerful.

When Quakers first started they talked about everybody having the Seed of God inside them. What might that mean?

Here is a way to explore this:

- Have a saucer with some different sized seeds on it. Gather everybody into a circle. Pass the saucer around and ask everybody to take a seed that they like and then hold it gently in their hand.
- Ask everybody to close their eyes and think about their seed. If you know what the seeds are for say that they are for flowers or fruit or trees or vegetables.
- Now ask everybody to imagine their seed gradually growing – breaking out of it's little shell, putting out a shoot, making leaves and growing into what it is meant to become.
- Hold the seed as something very precious.
- Now invite everybody to think about having a special place inside of them – like a seed – that is always reaching up to the light and growing. Allow a little time for this – a minute or so. At the same time as doing this ask everybody to think about a situation or somebody that they would like to help. It might be a little tiny thing or something bigger – family, home, school, friends, animals, the world or a particular country or place. Encourage everybody to have the two trains of thought flowing and growing together.
- Now, finally, say that God, the Light that Quakers say is in everybody is at the heart of the seed giving it strength and the power to grow.
- After a few more moments ask people to open their eyes and look slowly around them. Invite anybody that wants to, to share something of what they thought about or felt. Try to use open, wondering questions to encourage sharing - I wonder what that felt like? 'I wonder what you thought about or if you saw any pictures in your mind?'
- After a little while ask if people would like to plant their seeds. Have pots or plastic cups, compost, water, newspaper and spoons or garden tools available. Also have drawing materials, glue, glitter, modelling clay, paper and card, PVA glue and scissors available for people to record their experience of the session if they would like to.

