

# Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Issue 2 April 2007

Children



## Introduction

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

This children's work edition for 5 –12 year olds comes out monthly. 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. 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.



The third of four issues on exploring our spiritual journeys together in a Quaker context. This issue offers ways to look upwards - to God, the mystery.

## Exploring our spirituality together - the upwards

### Getting ready

#### Preparing Hearts & Minds

This month focuses on our journey upwards, "What is the deeper mystery?" "What do I mean by the word God?" "What is life about?" "What am I here for?". Some answers to these questions are:

- "The need of the journey upwards is the need to discover something of our deepest, truest self (soul)." *John Lee*.
- In *The Friend* recently a writer said one meaning for worship is to "love with wonder" (1919 Swarthmore lecture *L. Violet Hodgkin*.) This helped him see "something other in everyone present, a deeper, inner and mysterious reality... that made us one of each other. That, truly, was something to wonder at."
- "The awareness that there is something more to life than meets the eye, something more than the material, something more than the obvious, something to wonder at, something to respond to" *Terence Copley, Exeter University*.

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 I may need to be aware of in this session? Am I confident of the health and safety arrangements? Have I reflected on the theme?

#### Equipment Needed:

Check for equipment listed on additional sheets and in Engage section, Respond zones and Reflect section as well. Selected books and copies of activity sheets as needed for the number of children.

### Underpinning references

Quaker Faith & Practice  
1.01 first paragraph

Quaker Faith & Practice  
1.02 1.

"When I came into the silent assemblies of God's People, I felt a secret power among them, which touched my heart." *Robert Barclay*.

Quaker Faith & Practice  
1.02 7 first line

Quaker Faith & Practice  
1.02 17

# Gather

- Remember to ask for 1 or 2 children to be elders of children's meeting – explain the task. This can help children learn about and accept responsibility in meeting for worship. (See *Sheet 0.A of the sample Journeys in the spirit; to obtain this see sidebar*).
- Prepare the children's room beforehand with all you need. Arrange the chairs and cushions in a welcoming circle. It is better to add chairs if more children arrive than to have too many. Have a focal point of a candle or some flowers, shells, a smooth stone as a talking token, a teddy. Once everyone is settled have a simple 'go-round'; for example, "My name is Susan and I'm feeling ..... today". Ask a further question if someone is bursting with news. Thank for contributions - make it clear that it is OK to pass.
- You could start with a co-operative game followed by the period of stillness, to draw the group together and allow for latecomers to join in. *Sheet 2.A. Resources: Flowers, a talking token, shells, a candle, a stone.*

# Engage

We offer three possible ways into the theme for different or multi – ages.

## 1. Gods Name way upwards.

Exploring the different names of God.

- Play a gentle piece of music (*see sidebar for suggestions*). Place a shallow tray of water in the middle of the circle – float some real flowers. Ask everybody to name someone they admire or love - just as we may see our own faults in people we dislike, we may fail to see in ourselves the qualities we see in people we admire.
- Introduce the story "In God's Name" by saying that there are many names for God. Read the story. Pause at the end and then ask these questions allowing everyone who wishes to speak to do so: I wonder which name you liked best? I wonder if you know another name for God? You could also choose a page of the book and ask; I wonder what the person was thinking? (For example the soldier when he called God 'Maker of Peace'). *Resources: The book 'In God's name', a tray, water, food colour, flowers, music, CD or tape player.*

## 2. Fierce Feathers way upwards.

The 'Fierce Feathers' story has lots of meanings. Here we focus on the transforming nature of the Meeting for Worship, in which God, the mystery, Spirit can be found for, within and around us all. (*See sidebar for story versions different from Sheet 2.B*).

- Ask the children to settle, close their eyes and imagine sitting with their family a long time ago in a simple wooden Meeting House. Ask them to imagine hard wooden benches, sounds of rustling trees, birds singing, warm sun, the smell of fresh air. Tell the story. *Resources: Sheet 2.B*

## 3. God's Quiet way upwards.

Exploring quiet as a way to know something about the Quaker idea of the presence and reality of God.

- Play a little quiet or reflective music (*see sidebar for suggestions*). Slowly read through the guided thinking on *Sheet 2.B*. You could have some pictures of the quiet things to lay out. *Resources: Sheet 2.B. and pictures of quiet things. Music.CD, cassette or MP3 player with speakers.*

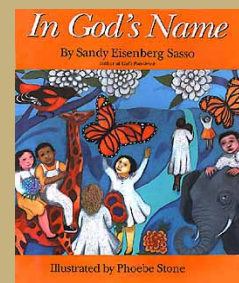
## References & other resources

To obtain Journeys sample Sheet 0.A go to [www.quaker.org.uk/cyp](http://www.quaker.org.uk/cyp) and follow the link in the sidebar to Resources

"True silence ...is to the spirit what sleep is to the body, nourishment and refreshment."

William Penn, 1699.

Quaker Faith & Practice 2.35



Available from the Quaker Bookshop 020 7663 1030 ISBN 1 879045 265

### Suggestions for music:

'Panis Angelicus', a piece by Michael Rutter or Bach, part of 'Lark Ascending' by Vaughan Williams, relaxation or meditation music - *some music can be downloaded from [www.bignoisemusic.com](http://www.bignoisemusic.com)*



'Fierce Feathers' - in 'Lighting Candles in the Dark, Stories of Love in Action' Quaker Bookshop. Story available for free at:

[www.tudo.co.uk/quakers\\_craw/s\\_hell/contents/quakers/fierce\\_feathers.html](http://www.tudo.co.uk/quakers_craw/s_hell/contents/quakers/fierce_feathers.html)

## References & other resources



A lovely book, 'Gods Quiet Things'. Available from the Quaker Bookshop  
ISBN 0 7459 4889 8



A simple headdress

'In worship, the spirit is present in the quietness and it renews and recreates love and friendship for all.' Fred Roberts

Remember that the pamphlet, 'Spiritual Development', by John Lee et al, is available from the Quaker Life Resources Room or the Quaker Bookshop in Friends House. This provides an excellent basis for thinking about the themes of this series of 'Journeys in the Spirit' – inward, outward, upward and downward.

# Respond

Do one of the first three zones - zone 4 can also be done

## 1. God's Name zone

In the book people speak their name for God but God doesn't listen until, in gathering around a pool and saying their name for God, the people discover that their name is part of the whole of God.

- Give each child at least one small square piece of paper for making simple representations of flowers; show how to fold the paper – see *Sheet 2.B for instructions*. The base of each flower should now be coloured all over with wax crayon. This makes it waterproof. On the other side a name for God is to be drawn or written. Then the 4 petals are folded over the drawing or word. Gather together around a tray of water on the floor or a low table and place the flowers, one at a time, waxed side down, on the water; people can choose to say what has been drawn or written. Sit and watch the flowers unfold. A flower could also be made for the children's 'who am I' box; see side bar beside 'Gather' about the sample issue of 'Journeys' and *Sheet 0.E* about 'who am I? boxes. *Resources: Plain paper, scissors, wax crayons, pencils or fine felt tips pens, a tray and water.*

## 2. Fierce Feathers zone.

- Have a conversation about the story. You could ask: I wonder what was your favourite part? I wonder what it would feel like if you had been there? I wonder what the leader meant by the Great Spirit? Allow time for children to think and answer if they want to. Show children a simple headdress made with corrugated cardboard and white card. They can also make one. They could creep very quietly, perhaps on all fours into meeting, before sitting very quietly. A child could place a white feather on the table; perhaps saying, 'This is for our meeting to show that it is a place of peace and safety.' The feather could be big and made from card and curled white paper strips – each child writes their first name on a strip, adults later do the same and add their strips. *Resources. Corrugated card, white card, PVA glue, scissors, pencils, and books on Native American art.*

## 3. God's Quiet zone.

- **Butterflies.** Decorate a butterfly (*Sheet 2.B for template*) with crayons, pencils or felt tips or put blobs of thick paint on one side of the butterfly and fold it over – always a surprise pattern. Draw, write or decorate the other side with favourite quiet things or a place where children think of God. Children may like to write prayers on this side. Return to a circle, place a large piece of green or blue material in the centre, butterflies are placed on the material, if wished, without comment. Relisten to a piece of music? *Resources. Sheet 2.B. Butterfly shape on card or children could draw their own, paints, brushes, oil pastels, crayons, pencils, sequins, glue sticks.*

## 4. God's Scavenger zone.

- **God's scavenger hunt.** This is a more active, outside activity. It is an opportunity to think about, recognise, collect or illustrate, where possible and safe, objects from the natural and human world that each child could recognise as coming from or being an aspect of God. *Resources. See Sheet 2.C for details.*
- **If God was...** A reflective exercise for thinking about God, the spirit as colour, sound, animal, feeling, texture, object. *Resources. See Sheet 2.D. Pens, pencils and crayons and enough copies of the sheet.*

## Reflect

Introduce this time by saying something like: 'we have been finding out together about what we think and feel about God. We have been thinking about the different names we each have for this.' Some of the activities in this issue lead naturally into a gathering: putting butterflies on a cloth, placing flowers in a 'pool' of water and watching them open, taking a white feather into meeting. This could be done whilst relistening to a piece of music with children and adults placing their creations in the centre on the piece of material without comment as in ministry. This could also be done in the adult meeting for worship. This then leads into brief stillness, ending with shaking hands and a stretch up high.

## Ongoing activity - abolition journeys Quilts, slavery and being brave

This is the second of the series of activities linked to the abolition of the slave trade.

To begin. Hello and welcome. Go round the circle and ask each person to say 'Hello, my name is ....'. A long time ago, some people were not allowed to have the names given to them by their parents – they had to have names given to them by someone else, the people who owned them. They would first have had a name like Mary or Albert and then the name of their owner or his house and big farm, like Ransome or Codrington. Now begin a conversation using these questions: What is slavery? What do you own? What belongs to you? – e.g. books, toys, a pet? Does anyone own you? Do you own anyone? Encourage conversation and then lead into the text on *Sheet 2 .E* then go on to do the activities on *Sheet 2.F*.

## 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 God, the Divine, the big questions? What is there for you to learn from this session? What might you do differently another time?

## Links to other organisations and resources

[www.quaker.org.uk/cyp](http://www.quaker.org.uk/cyp) and click on Database of Ideas.

[www.quaker.org.uk/1807](http://www.quaker.org.uk/1807) - lots about the abolition of the slave trade and the role of Quakers working with others.

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

This issue was written by Jane Nicholls and edited by Chris Nickolay with contributions from Ann Lewis, Madeleine Harding. With thanks to Mary Stone.

## References & other resources

Ongoing activity - stories and resources:

'Follow the Drinking Gourd' - Janette Winter - the Drinking Gourd (American name for the constellation we call The Plough – points to the North Star.) Song and music at the end of the book. ISBN 0-679-81997-5 £5.50 from the Letterbox Library Tel 020 7503 4801

[www.letterboxlibrary.com](http://www.letterboxlibrary.com).

'Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt' –

Deborah Hopkinson.  
ISBN 0-679-87472-0,  
available from Letterbox  
Library £5.50.

'The Secret of Freedom' - Marcia Vaughan (7+) good on the quilt messages.

ISBN 1-584300-251-8  
available online through  
Quaker Bookshop or Amazon.  
'Going West' – M.Waddell & P.Dupasquier; available on Amazon.

For other information on the Ongoing Activity please see the *Journeys in the Spirit Sample Issue*; for copies of *Abolition Journeys* (multi - age working on the abolition) contact: Carmel Keogh on 020 7663 1017  
[carmelk@quaker.org.uk](mailto:carmelk@quaker.org.uk)).

**Linking with the wider meeting** - think about using the activities in an all age meeting for worship, a shared activity or meeting for learning.

**The next children's work issue of 'Journeys in the spirit' will focus on 'Exploring our spiritual journeys, the downward–our relationships with the world' and will be available from May 1<sup>st</sup> 2007**

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# Journeys in the Spirit

Children



## Sheet 2.A

Gather

Co-operative Game

Magic clay

Ask one person to hold in her or his hands a fairly large piece of imaginary clay. Carefully and quietly mould the clay into an object, e.g. a jug, or a dog or..., sit back and look at it with pride then squash the clay back into a ball shape again and pass it very carefully onto their neighbour, who has a turn making an object. This is to be done in silence in a very meditative way.



## Engage “Fierce Feathers” a true story of early Quakers in America

Explain that you are going to tell a story.

- Imagine you are in Meeting for worship in a log cabin in America a long time ago.
- You are sitting quietly with your family and other families you know. You are here to worship God
- You want God to guide your life and the life of your family and friends
- As you sit quietly, be aware of the hardness of the wooden bench you are sitting on.
- Your Meeting House is set amongst trees-perhaps they are pine trees
- Be aware of the smell of the trees....Although it is silent in the Meeting House you can hear the wind in the trees....
- How does it feel to sit so quietly?
- Then you look out of the window...you can see the branches swaying in the breeze...
- And then you see something else – or you think you have - it’s a feather moving along the bottom part of the window...
- Nobody else seems to notice...But you know who wears feathers...Yes, Native Americans.
- The door slowly opens...and you see standing there several people with bows and arrows and axes and knives...their faces are painted and they look very fierce...
- How do you feel now?.....What do you think is going to happen?
- You look around the Meeting House ...all is peaceful and still...You look back at the new visitors...they look puzzled...
- They look at each other.... then put down their weapons and come quietly in ...they also sit down quietly...(Wait a while...)
- Finally the Meeting is over. The elders shake hands and everybody shakes hands and smiles at each other including the new visitors. One of the visitors speaks French. He says to a Friend that when they came they wanted to kill everyone there (pause) but they found people with no guns or knives worshipping the Great Spirit (pause). The Great Spirit told them not to kill the people (pause). Slowly and solemnly he takes a white feather. He fastens the feather above the door on the front of the Meeting House – he says that all will be safe and that ‘we and you are friends’.

# Journeys in the Spirit



## Children

### Sheet 2.B

#### Engage Gods quiet things Guided thinking.

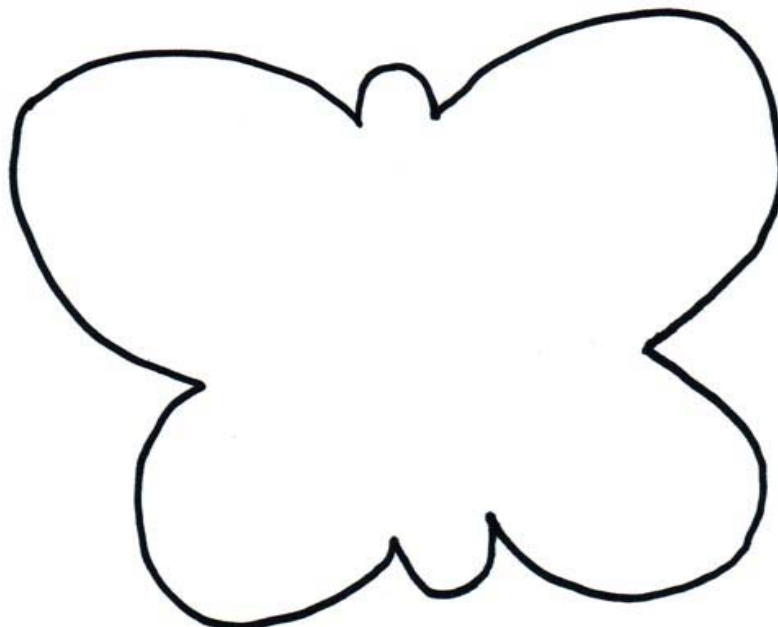
- We live in a very noisy world – cars, planes, television, radio, CD players, mp3, computers, PS2 and XBOX.
- I think, because our world is noisy, we can miss all the quiet things that could help us hear our own quiet inside.
- I talk about these as God's quiet things because they can help us feel peaceful, calm, quiet, peaceful or kind – they might also make us feel excited or pleased.
- I am going to share some of my thoughts about quiet things with you and then, if you want you can think about and find ways to share some of your quiet things. Just listen and think about and imagine these quiet things:
- *(Pause a while after each one)*..a cloud as it moves across the sky...a rose or a flower opening its petals. ...a leaf falling to the ground....a frog swimming or a worm wriggling....Sunlight...the moon moving across the sky....an eagle flying high in the sky....a spider spinning or a butterfly opening its wings...a still candle flame...rain before it touches the ground, a tree or your coat.
- Now, can you think about some of your quiet things?

#### Respond God's name zone Simple floating flowers

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. Now follow the instruction in 'Respond' God's Name Zone.

#### Respond God's quiet zone Butterfly template



# Journeys in the Spirit



## Children

### Sheet 2.C

#### **Respond**      **God's scavenger hunt – looking for that of God around us – inside and outside**

- Provide each child with a box or tub to collect things in – a pencil and a little pad will also be useful
- Say that everyone is going to look for things that are part of the great big thing we call God
- You may need an extra volunteer or two to help children
- Give out copies of the list below
- Remind everybody about where it is and isn't OK to go
- Remind everybody to be careful about what is picked or collected – flowers that are plentiful - yes; breaking branches from trees – no, for example.

#### **Here is the list:**

- ❖ Something that you find in a place where it doesn't belong
- ❖ Something beautiful that God made
- ❖ Something beautiful that a person made
- ❖ Something that a blind person would enjoy
- ❖ Something that could be helpful
- ❖ Something soft
- ❖ Something hard
- ❖ Something that shows love
- ❖ Two things that seem very different but really are very alike
- ❖ Something you can smell
- ❖ Something you can hear
- ❖ Something you can taste
- ❖ Something purple
- ❖ A plant that isn't green
- ❖ Something older than you
- ❖ Something that you found on the ground or the floor
- ❖ A stone that isn't grey
- ❖ Something that you found in a place that is higher than you are tall
- ❖ Something that is younger than you are
- ❖ Something that makes you think of God

It is ok for just some of these to be collected – children can be encouraged to choose those they like the idea of – the categories may speak to different preferences and parts of their nature and thus be encouraging. Allow some time for a sharing of what has been collected. It might be that an object or two could be put into a 'who am I' box (see *Journeys Sample Sheet 0.E* – see side bar next to 'Gather' in this issue).



# Journeys in the Spirit

Children

Sheet 2.D



**Respond** Gods scavenger hunt 'If God was....'

**Thinking about God - the spirit – in our own way**

Have a short period of quiet.

Describe what everybody is going to do:

- Listen to questions
- Write, draw or doodle their thoughts in the spaces on their own copy of this sheet stuck or copied onto card
- End with a little quiet worship after a brief time for children to share some of what they have thought if they want to

**Here are the questions:**

**So, "If your spirit/God was a.....**

Colour - what colour would it be?

Sound - what sound would it be?

Feeling – what feeling would it be?

Sport – what sport would it be?

Creature – what creature would it be?

A type of weather – what weather would it be?



# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children



### Sheet 2.E

#### Ongoing activity Abolition of the slave trade Quilts and bravery

**At one time, some people owned other people** – it was called slavery and the people who were owned were called slaves and the people who owned them were called slave owners. Some Quakers owned slaves but then some other Quakers realised that it was wrong to own another person because all of us are equal to God and they stopped and began to persuade other people that they should stop too. But a lot of people simply went on owning slaves. They did not like what Quakers were saying and doing and they were nasty to them and anyone else who tried to stop slavery. They did not want to lose the riches they were making from the sugar, tea and coffee plantations in the Caribbean and the southern states of America where the slaves worked in the hot sun for no wages. In America, Quakers helped slaves who ran away. This was a scary thing to do.

#### **Being brave:**

What do you find scary? E.g. the dark, crocodiles, monsters, being on your own, getting lost? What do you do when you are scared? E.g. hold your cuddly blanket, call for your mummy, get into bed with your brother or sister, cry, shout. (Explore the links between being frightened and being brave, you can't have one without the other.)

#### **Brave slaves sent messages:**

Some of the slaves were very brave. They found a way of sending messages to one another to say when it was a good time to run away to the Underground Railway. This wasn't a real railway but a secret route to freedom from America to Canada. Lots of Quakers helped with this.

People would put a quilt with a pattern on it, say a star or a bear's paw, out on the veranda and that meant "Follow the North Star by the route where the bears are..." or there were songs with messages in them and the slaves would sing them to each other so they would know when to leave on their path to freedom.

#### **Some ideas for activities**

1. Make quilt patterns – (see *Sheet 2.F*). These could be for colouring in on A4 paper or sticking patterned or coloured paper on or they could be cut out of fabrics and glued on to a background fabric, e.g. calico. (Making real patchwork is tricky and required sewing skills and time but is possible. The patchwork blocks can be found in any basic Patchwork book.)
2. Make a map of how to get from your house to a friend's house. Use a big sheet of paper and draw your map. Show where houses, streets, trees and parks are located. Cut out shapes from paper and fabric. Be inventive about what to use – leaves, small twigs, lolly sticks, buttons, pasta etc.
3. Do a play of how the slaves sent their secret messages, how they ran away and hid in carts and barns and how Quakers and other good people helped them and how glad they were when they reached freedom in Canada. Explore the fear and bravery needed.

Invite children to share what they thought and done. Think about being brave. Here is a prayer that could be used at the end of the session:

*'Dear God, when we are frightened, please help us to be brave like the runaway slaves. Please bless the people in the world who are not free to live their lives as we do and give them courage. Teach us to use our freedom carefully so that whatever we do, we remember what effect it has on others. Amen'*

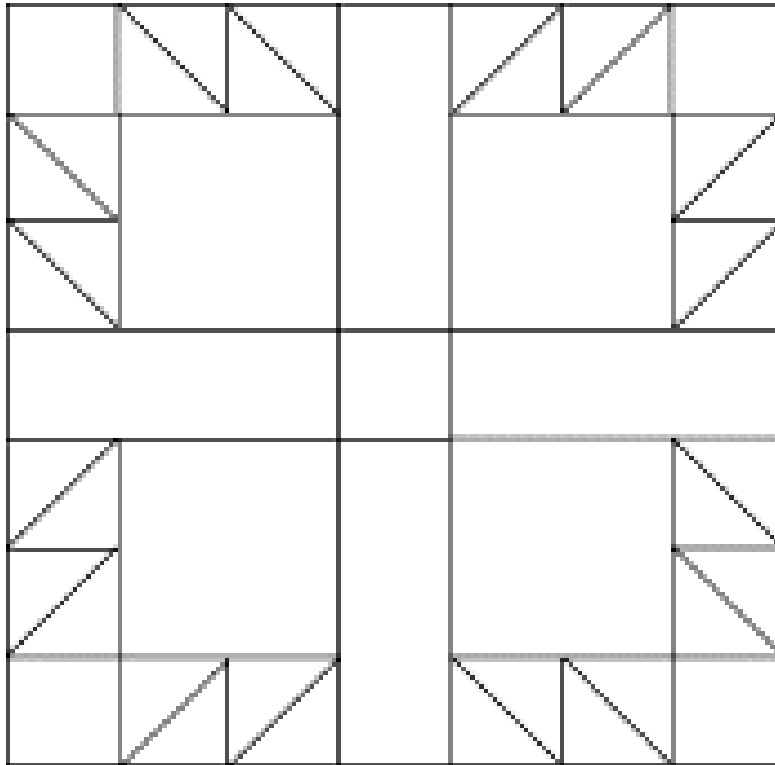
# Journeys in the Spirit

Children



Sheet 2.F

Ongoing activity      **Quilting**  
The *Bear Claw* & The *North Star* quilt patterns



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