

# Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Issue 32

October 2009

Children



## One Quaker family – some little stories

“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 sixth in the ‘Our Quaker stories’ series.  
May 2009 – August 2010

## Getting ready

This issue focuses on one Quaker family’s experience in a particular field - missionary work. The Rodwell family went to China 100 years ago, with the Friends Foreign Mission in China. How Quakers organised things was very different then although when you read some of the stories the heart of what they ended up doing was similar to what many Friends do today.

Today, many Friends are again growing in confidence about speaking of what we believe and hold to be true. The Britain Yearly Meeting Framework for Action and its encouragement to reach out in different ways, such as through Quaker Week from October 3<sup>rd</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> 2009 are examples of this. How can children be part of this?

How might talking about or even admitting to being a Quaker be different or the same then and now? Can we still be too scared of talking about what we believe? How do we worship and work together to build confident inner lives, and share the experience appropriately with others? from the Rodwell family and earlier Friends about how to do this?

The topical activity on climate change is one way that we as Quakers are reaching out – it’s about what we do as an expression of what we say. We can’t all stop warlords fighting – but each of us, of any age, has ministry to offer.



## Underpinning references

Quotes: Wm. Penn, QF and P, 19.48

Advices and queries 2 and 5

1 Corinthians, Ch.1:V. 12 – 31

Friends seek God’s help in choosing what they are uniquely suited to do, in a world which is so full of needs that we cannot respond to all of them - *Two individual Friends from Sheffield and Balby Area Meeting respond to the Framework for Action*

# Gather

Everybody sits in a circle, and introduces his or herself, saying one thing which they think is different about them - it might be having red hair, or speaking another language. Then go round again and each person says something that they share with the others – something the same.

Have things available which are about difference - some chopsticks with some spoons and forks, a book in a different language (QF and P will do!), a children's book, a Bible, pictures from magazines of different people.



# Engage



This is Joanna Rodwell. When she grew up her daughter was Meg Hill who is telling the stories that follow. See Sheet 32 A for pictures of Joanna and her family and of Meg.

Meg says: “Joanna’s parents were Quaker missionaries. Quakers then thought that they should go to other countries and tell them about our God, and about Jesus. They also trained in healthcare, so that they could help people to get well, and look after their children better. When they got to China, though, they realised that the Chinese had their own ways of understanding God, and that people there were just like anyone else – sometimes kind and loving, and sometimes full of anger and fear. So my Grandparents realised that they needed to work alongside the Chinese people, and not think they should teach them what to believe. So I think they learned to respect each other.” On Sheets 32A -32.C there are five little stories about Joanna, her mum and dad, her family and people who helped them. These are called:

**Little Story 1** - ‘Everybody looks the same!’

**Little Story 2** - ‘War and other scary things 1’.

**Little Story 3** - ‘War and other scary things 2’.

**Little Story 4** - Joanna up a mountain’.

**Little Story 5** - ‘What’s not in the picture?’

Read one or more of these stories and then follow with an activity from the Respond section.

There are activities linked with each of these stories. Think about which ages the stories of war are told to. They have been written carefully so as to be suitable for most ages and the activities are designed to help children process and express any thoughts and feelings. Say that in telling these stories they become part of our own story and we become part of theirs.

## References & other resources

Poem “Tyger, Tyger burning bright,” by Wm. Blake - something we all share is being part of the Divine – some would say, ‘made by God’.



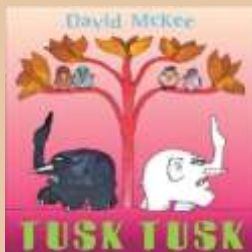
## Quaker Faith and Practice query no: 17:

Do you respect that of God in everyone though it may be expressed in unfamiliar ways or be difficult to discern? Each of us has a particular experience of God and each must find the way to be true to it. When words are strange or disturbing to you, try to sense where they come from and what has nourished the lives of others.

Listen patiently and seek the truth which other people’s opinions may contain for you. Avoid hurtful criticism and provocative language.

Do not allow the strength of your convictions to betray you into making statements or allegations that are unfair or untrue. Think it possible that you may be mistaken.’

**Is there a way you could rewrite this Advice for children?**



A story about a war between different elephants that has a surprising and positive outcome. Available from the Quaker Bookshop ISBN-13: 9781842705797

## Making a Scroll:

<http://www.quietfish.com/notebook/?p=3115>



ISBN-10: 185175105X available to buy from the Quaker Bookshop on 020 7663 1030 or at [quakercentre@quaker.org.uk](mailto:quakercentre@quaker.org.uk) and to borrow from the Quaker Centre Resources Space 0207 663 1030

## Little story 1: 'Everybody looks the same!'

Show everybody the picture of Joanna in Engage again – ask everybody to think about her being in a country her mum and dad called home but she didn't know or like. Ask if anybody has ever been in a new place that they hadn't been in before – maybe on holiday, a new school, a new home with new neighbours or in a different country. What was that like? Offer time for anybody to speak who wants to. Activity: use the faces on *Sheet 32.C* – have several sheets available. Ask everybody who has spoken to pick one show what they have felt in different situations they have described – happy, puzzled, scared, angry, sad or excited?

## Little story 2 - 'War and other scary things 1'.

For this and the next story, have a selection of toys children could use to act out the stories, include construction toys – bricks etc. Also have lots of good quality arts material for children to use. Before inviting children to use equipment or play ask questions to stimulate conversation like, 'I wonder how Meg's grandmother felt when she was in the house with her children. I wonder how the children, including Joanna, felt. Listen and comment positively as appropriate – say things like, 'that's interesting – I think that's true' or 'I think I might feel like that too' and then invite others to speak. There may be 'silly' or nervous comments – just accept these and move on.

## Little story 3 - 'War and other scary things 2'.

As well as the suggestions in 'Little story 2' also look at *Sheet 32.D* for activities about making scrolls like that awarded to John Rodwell and his Friends. (See sidebar for an internet link to another way to make a scroll. See Reflect section on Page 4 for the Chinese characters that spell peace ). You could also ask a series of wondering questions: 'I wonder, which part of this story did you like the best; I wonder, which part of this story do you think is most important; I wonder which part of this story are you in or is in you; I wonder if there is any part of this story that you could leave out and still have all the story that you need'. There can then be time for use of toys and equipment and arts materials.

## Little story 4 – 'Joanna up a mountain'.

Ask the children, 'I wonder, what you think about Joanna going up the mountain'. You could also ask, 'I wonder what you would have asked the Buddhist monk?'

If you can, get a copy of '*Don't just do something, sit there*' by Mary Stone (see side bar for how to obtain).

The book has a lot of very good guidance for adults working with children about stilling, centering and guided visualisations. Visualisations can be powerful and need to be done with care. A visualisation that links with **Little Story 4** begins with eyes closed, being still, quiet and relaxed. It continues with imagining going on a safe walk through a wood or forest up a hill or mountain. At the top of the hill or mountain, still safe, there is a wise person. In the imagined walk the next task is to sit and wait for the wise person to give you a gift, or she, or he, may have a question to ask of 'you'. After a little while there is a walk back down the hill or mountain, stopping at the bottom, resting for a little while and then opening eyes again. A slow pace to the telling of this is important. Mary Stone refers to a similar visualisation and offers a list of questions that children can then be asked for which the answers are written down or drawn – with no requirement to share unless people want to. Finally, one more question that can be used after **Little Story 4** – ask, 'I wonder, if you were asked what do you believe what would you answer?' Replies can be spoken, written or drawn.



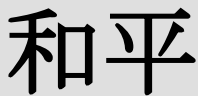
**Little story 5 – 'Whats not in the picture?'** If you have used this story and asked the questions afterwards you could tell the 'Tusk Tusk' story – see side bar - or just have an assortment of creative materials to be used for quietly illustrating the story or one about themselves.



## Reflect

Joanna grew up, had a family and, when she was much older wrote a book about being a Quaker. Just for moment remember the stories of Joanna and her family. They are part of our big Quaker family. As Quakers we think we can do good things in our world – even when it might be hard. Even a very simple thing like remembering to have a thankful silence before a meal can help - small people can help a family to do this.

Say something like, lets have a little more quiet time, and say a quiet thank you for something good in your day or life. Re-join Meeting (where appropriate) and hold on to the silence.



**These are the traditional Chinese characters for the word 'peace'. In this time of reflection lay out white card and black pencils, crayons or charcoal for drawings of this symbol to be copied in the quiet and stillness. Have an original on a bigger piece of paper.**

## Review

The review can happen at the time or later – it maybe done 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 stimulated by the stories and activities in their time together? What is there for you to learn from this session? What might you do differently another time?

## Topical activity

In December 2009 a very important meeting is taking place in Copenhagen, involving people from all over the world. It's the United Nations Climate Change Summit. This is happening because the Earth overall is getting warmer. Ice at the North and South Poles and elsewhere is melting this is making sea levels rise. Low-level land will be submerged, countries will get hotter and weather patterns will change. Human activities such as using fossil fuels are making a major contribution to climate change. See *Sheets 32.E & F*.

**Please remember:** On November 4<sup>th</sup> in Friends House in London there is a special gathering of people from the United Nations and lots of different churches and religions. The meeting is called: **Climate change - we can change**. See *Journeys 31* Topical activity for how your children's meeting can help with this.

## Links to other organisations and resources

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

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/friends-china-0> - links to a Quaker Library online exhibition with more photos. Some of this is written by Joanna as an adult.

<http://babelfish.yahoo.com/> - a translation website

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/copenhagen> - Quaker Peace & Social Witness Resources

This issue was written by Meg Hill and edited by Chris Nickolay; Wendy Edwards wrote the Topical activity

The next children's issue of *Journeys in the Spirit Issue 33*, available November 2<sup>nd</sup> looks at *how to tell our stories about knowing God in each of us*; *Issue 34* available December 2<sup>nd</sup> looks at *stories of Quakers in Bolivia*; *Issue 35* January 4<sup>th</sup> 2010 is about *Elizabeth Fry*.

### Ideas & other resources

**Joanna Kirkby's book:**  
**'The two oceans : the dark and the light'**  
**ISBN: 1850722668**

Joanna writes about the lives of three 17th century Quakers, her parents in China, the Quakers in 1920's Russia, and about herself as a Quaker. Available from the Quaker Bookshop on 020 7663 1030 or at: [quakercentre@quaker.org.uk](mailto:quakercentre@quaker.org.uk).

**What could your Meeting do as all ages together?**

**Little Stories 2 & 3** could be told as the start of a Meeting for Worship – with a little introduction. Follow this with the shared production of a long scroll, making peace word copies or feeling faces.

Alternatively some of the topical activity on climate change could be done as a whole Meeting.

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# Journeys in the Spirit



## Children

Sheet 32.A

Engage

Little stories



Here is Meg's mum when she was a little girl – she is with her mum, dad, brother and sisters.



This is Meg who is telling these stories



This is Wong Wong and Joanna in Scarborough

### Little story 2 - 'Everybody looks the same!'

“But they all look the same! I can't tell the difference between all these people. They look funny, and I can't understand a word they are saying. And they smell a bit funny, too. I wish I were safely at home with my mother and father, and my nurse, Wong Wong, who takes care of me when Mummy is busy”.

This was my mother's feeling when she was about 5 years old. And where was she, when she felt scared and shy and different? She was in Scarborough, staying with her grandparents, on holiday with her family from their work in China, where she was born. She didn't speak any English, and hadn't seen many English people before. What would that be like?

Wong Wong, her nurse, who had come with them, felt just as strange, and the people in Scarborough stared at her, because she wore her Chinese clothes and also had tiny feet, which had been bound, to make them stay really small, because the Chinese thought big feet were terribly ugly.

# Journeys in the Spirit



## Children

Sheet 32.B

Engage

Little stories

### Little story 2 - 'War and other scary things 1'.

"China was a poor country, and there were many people called warlords, who used soldiers to fight each other for land and money. The poor people had to be in their armies, but they didn't always want to – sometimes even teenagers and children had to fight. Once, my Grandfather was away, and my Grandmother had her three little children with her in a house in the city, when fighting broke out all around. All day, and all night, guns were firing around them, and one bullet came through the window and into my little brother's cot, but it didn't hurt him. Sometimes people wanted to hide in the compound, the space around the house where my grandmother lived, where it felt safe, and my Grandmother had to let them."

### Little story 3 - 'War and other scary things 2'.

"As Quakers we think that if we can understand what makes war happen, we can help to find other ways of sorting out problems. But there was often fighting when my mother was little. Once, my Grandfather and two of his fellow missionaries were asked to stop two armies from trying to get into the town of Suining. Many people would have been killed if they had got in and fought each other. The three men talked to the different armies all day, and sometimes had to stand between the men who wanted to fight each other. In the end, one army agreed to withdraw, and the town and all its people were safe. To thank them, the town gave beautiful silk scrolls to them, telling them how thankful they were." See *Sheet 32.D* to read what was on the scroll. This story could be told using plain wooden figures or other toy people – duplo or lego for example.



### Little story 4 – 'Joanna up a mountain'.

"My mother and her family used to go up into the mountains in the hot weather in summer where it was cooler. They would be carried up the hills in a chair carried by two men. Once they dropped her, and she fell into a wet rice paddy – maybe like the one in the picture! She used to go off for walks by herself, and no-one seemed to think that was strange, or dangerous, although she did once meet a poisonous snake!



One day, she climbed up the mountain by herself. She came to a very high place, where she could see a big building below her, with lots of men going in and out, wearing orange robes. She knew that they were Buddhist monks at their monastery, and she watched them, and listened to their chanting. An old monk came and stood beside her, and they watched the monastery together. My mother was six, but she could only speak Chinese, so she understood the monk when he asked her who she was, and what she was doing there. She told him she was on holiday with her family, and when he asked her what her parents were doing in China, she did her best to explain that they were Quakers from England and that they wanted to help the Chinese people. He wanted to know why they would do that. At six, she couldn't tell him very much, but he seemed to understand. He walked with her back down to her house below."

### Little story 5 – 'What's not in the picture'.

Look again at the main family photo on *Sheet 32.A*. Everybody look at Joanna and her sister Phyllis standing next to her. What do you think their faces are saying? What about how they are standing? What do you think they might be feeling? Just before the photo was taken the sisters were arguing and pulling each others hair. Ask if anybody has been in arguments or fights like the sisters. Ask, what was that like – how did you feel? What happened afterwards?



# Journeys in the Spirit

Children



Sheet 32.C

Respond

Little stories



# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children



Sheet 32.D

Respond

**The scroll given to John and his Friends was 7 feet long and made of silk. On the scroll it said:**

*'You, in your kindness, have come across the Seas, and it has become well known here that you have your hearts full of the preaching of the Truth, and your widely displayed love has shown the true benevolence of your hearts. Regarding Righteousness as of great price, you have travelled far like pilgrims, fearing no danger, whether to the remotest East or the most deserted regions of the West. Since, in your hearts, you have identified yourselves with all mankind, you are, in spite of the differences of our national customs, at one with us.*

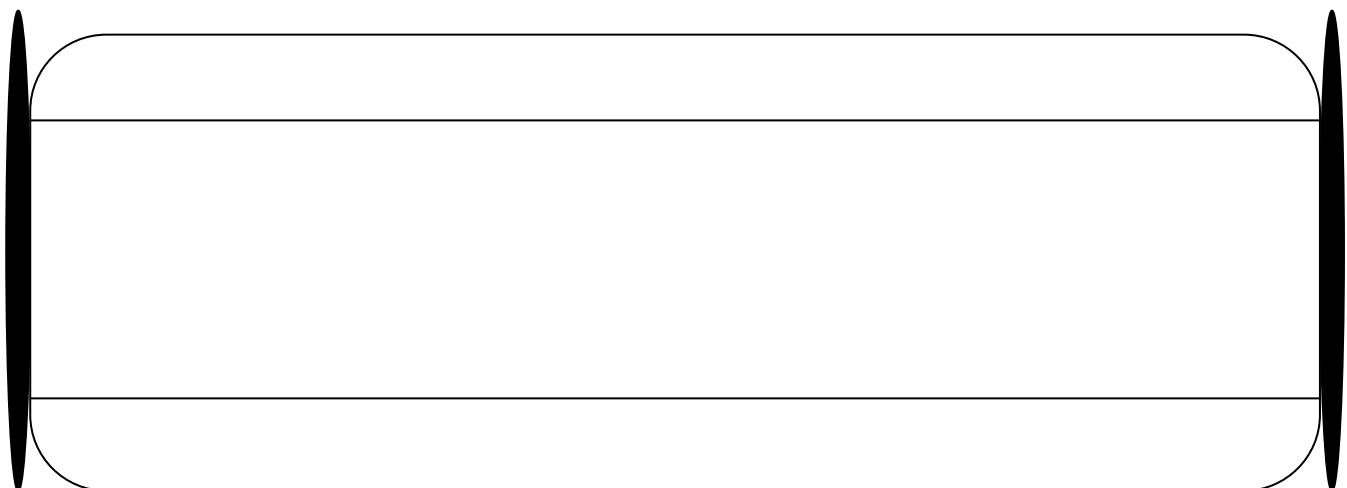
*When, within the last few years, you came to live with us at Suining, the inhabitants enjoyed peace as if we had partaken of good wine to repletion. But times changed and the beacons burned to warn the people. There was fighting over all the land so that we could not sleep in peace. Then you arose in your boldness, displaying hundred-fold bravery. You and we, the people of Suining, helped one another. In sympathy with our hearts you went in and out among the combatants, as a snake wriggles in its progress. Thus it came to pass that without firing an arrow or casting a stone, they freed us from the danger that was impending. How we admire your action! Truly may you be styled righteous. Well may you be compared to Lu Lien, the hero of olden story. We, people of Suining, ponder on this and can never forget it, and so that the true perfume of the good deed may be preserved, we have written this record.'*



**Children's Meeting and helpers could each make a scroll about some part of their own family history. This could be done over one or two meetings. If possible have a variety of scroll pictures from books or the internet so that children can see how different decoration can be done. Before the work begins have everybody sit around their paper in the quiet for just a few moments.**

How to make a scroll:

Take a long piece of paper (could use A3, or alternatively for a group effort try using the back of wall paper). Draw a margin against the edges of the length of the paper. Children to use a light hb pencil to sketch their drawings or story. Use watered down paint / watercolours to paint the finished picture and write the story at the bottom of the scroll when dry (still leaving the margin). Attach kitchen foil tubes or a piece of dowel to each end and roll – tie with string / ribbon / wool. This can be made either portrait or landscape. Have fun and experiment.





# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children



Sheet 32.E

Topical activity

Climate change - we can change

*Make sure you first read the Topical Activity paragraph on Page 4 of this issue of Journeys in the Spirit.*

People at the Copenhagen Conference will be discussing climate change and what can be done to reduce its impact. The Copenhagen Conference will be looking at what the whole world can do, getting a fair deal for everyone. Campaigners are hoping that this conference will decide that action must be taken to limit increase in global temperatures to 2°C, and that the poorest and most vulnerable will be protected.

We all have to think about changing our lifestyle so that we drastically reduce emission of gases that cause climate change. We in the West produce much more carbon dioxide (the most common climate damaging gas), than those in developing countries. The effects of climate change will be felt here in UK, but they will be much worse in countries such as Bangladesh, and these countries are producing far less greenhouse gases than we are.

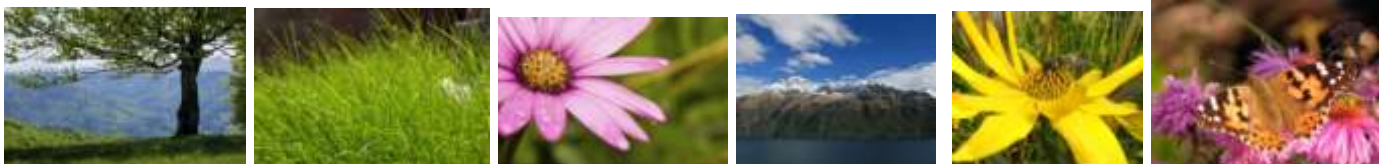
As Quakers, we already have a commitment to looking after the planet and leading lives that show respect for the Earth. (See *Advice and Queries 1.02.41, 1.02.42*) Now, more than ever, we must 'let our lives speak'. These are some of the things that we can do.

- learn about climate change and its effects, especially on the poorest and most vulnerable countries
- promote and live in a way that actively reduces harmful emissions and waste.
- contacting our political representatives and telling them about our concerns.

.....and yes, children can add to and be part of this. Children can encourage adults to make changes – to love and nurture the world, its beauty and its gifts. Display a number of the Make Waves posters from the July Quaker News – these will be in your Meeting House. There is also a mini-version overleaf on *Sheet 32.F*. Also visit <http://www.quaker.org.uk/files/Quaker-News-Summer-2009-No-71.pdf>

Sit in a circle, inside or outside, ask, "Who has heard of something called climate change?" Wait for any answers – add a simple version of your own about what it means. Have some objects or pictures which represent climate change, e.g. some tree leaves to represent forests, sand to represent desertification, water to represent flooding, dry plants to represent crop failure; say a little about them. Begin by saying something like: "we all love our planet, earth and want to help look after it". Now say something like, "We are going to think for a moment about what this thing called climate change might do and wonder a little bit if there is anything, that we as children, can do to help." Sit quietly for a few minutes to think about how this effects us and our world and what we might do. Take care that the emphasis is on positive action to minimise climate change, rather than causing alarm and fear.

Children will have learnt something about climate change at school. Some are likely to be very well informed. Have a 'go round' where each person has the opportunity to say something more of what they know about climate change or how they feel about it. A 'talking stick' or similar, can be used. This is also an opportunity for any misunderstandings or fears to be voiced. Emphasise that lots can be done to help – be careful not to provoke alarm.



**Activities:** First say that there are a lot of things we can all do – whatever size or age we are. Here are four possible things to do today:

**1.** Say that there is going to be a big march with lots of people making a big wave together London on 5<sup>th</sup> December. More than 100 organisations are involved, calling on the government to stop using coal and adopting greener options for releasing energy. There are a lot of things we can do to support this action - see <http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/files/scc-summer-action-pack.pdf>. Children's Meeting could be helped draft a Minute to go to Meeting asking for Meeting to support and arrange for Friends to go – including children. Posters could be designed and made to decorate the Meeting House or perhaps be ready take on the march.

Continued on *Sheet 32.F*

# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children



### Sheet 32.F Topical activity Climate change - we can change *continued*

2. Children and adults write a letter to your MP, expressing concerns about climate change and encouraging them to speak up about climate change. What would you put in the letter to remind them of what is at risk. You can find the name and address of your MP at [www.parliament.uk/mps/lords-and-offices](http://www.parliament.uk/mps/lords-and-offices). This might suit older children in the group. Ensure that the letter is polite, short and focused. This could be done as a group activity. What picture would younger children send your MP about climate change? Tell the local papers.

3. Blue decorated cup cakes.

Decorate cup cakes or biscuits with blue icing. Blue is the theme colour for the march - the colour of the sea and water, the rising water levels of climate change, and also the rising tide of people raising awareness about climate change. Have some cup cakes already made or bought, or use plain biscuits. Decorate with blue water icing, or roll-on icing, dyed blue with food colouring or blueberry juice. Be prepared with aprons and warn about blue fingers if the children are using the blue food dye. These cakes or biscuits could be shared with the rest of Meeting, after an explanation of their significance, and a plug for the march on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

Settle into quiet. Each person to think of something they love about the Earth – a special place, an animal, a bird.

At some point check by yourself or with others how this session went and what might be done differently next time.

The next Topical Activity, In Journeys in the Spirit 33 will focus on our own lifestyle, and how we can influence others to make changes.

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/copenhagen> - for Quaker Peace and Social Witness Resources

SAVE  
Climate change threatens all of us, and time is running out. Our Quaker  
LIVES

faith calls us to strive together for a better world, doing more with less.

MAKE  
In December, world leaders meet to agree a global deal on climate  
WAVES

change. Let's work together to make that meeting matter.

Get involved. Go to:  
[www.quaker.org.uk/environment](http://www.quaker.org.uk/environment)

This is a small version of the Quaker News poster – you could copy enough for people in your Meeting. You could decorate the children's meeting room. Hang lots of them as pennants at the front of your Meeting House.