



Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition July 2016 Issue 104



Faithful lives Quaker faith & practice chapter 18

Getting ready

This issue is the first in a series of issues which focus on 'Quaker faith & practice', the book of discipline of the Religious Society of Friends. Local meetings are currently engaged in a programme of reading 'Quaker faith & practice', so that they are familiar with each chapter and can contribute to the decision of Britain Yearly Meeting about when the book should be revised. It will not be possible to consider all of the chapters or to cover them in the same order as the Yearly Meeting calendar, but it is hoped that the issues will give children and the adults meeting with them an opportunity to become more familiar with the rich contents of the book.

This issue looks at chapter 18 of 'Quaker faith & practice'. It is made up of a selection of the testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of the ordinary Friends who have made up the previous generations of our Society. They show us that, whatever our lives are like, we can be faithful to our own calling and these testimonies can continue to inspire us today.

In preparation for children's meeting, you might find it helpful to read the whole of chapter 18 of 'Quaker faith & practice'. Consider the children in your meeting. If any of them have recently experienced bereavement, it is important to be sensitive to this when explaining about testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of Friends and when talking about Friends who have died.

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

Explaining testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of Friends

Welcome everyone in your usual way and ensure that everyone knows each other's names. You might like to have a short time of silence with a lighted candle or have an opportunity to share news about the week.

Ask if anyone knows what a testimony to the grace of God in the life of someone is about. Children may have heard this term before, especially if someone in the meeting has died recently. It has a different meaning to the Quaker testimonies, which describe the ways that Quakers try to live in the world: simplicity, truth, equality, peace.

Grace is about the way that love can work in us and through us. Explain that when a Quaker dies, their meeting writes some words to be thankful for the things that love has inspired them to do in their life. Sometimes a particular person's testimony might be interesting to a wider group of people and then it is sent to be read by other Quakers in the Yearly Meeting.

Underpinning references

Quaker faith & practice chapter 18: Faithful lives

Quaker faith & practice 4.27: Testimonies concerning deceased Friends

Engage

Testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of two Quakers

Read the edited testimonies from 'Quaker faith & practice' found in *additional resource 104.A* (see sidebar).

Talk about these testimonies

- Which one do you like best? Why?
- Why do you think these particular testimonies were chosen to be included in 'Quaker faith & practice'? Who chose them?
- Can you think of any other Quakers whose testimonies should be included for others to read? What is it about the lives of these Quakers that inspire you?

Whilst Lucy is remembered for doing brave, exciting things that made people thankful, Katy is remembered for doing small, ordinary but very kind things that also made people thankful. For both women, God's grace was about finding strength and courage to do things they didn't always find easy.

Maybe courage isn't as much about being a hero as it is about becoming our best selves: being connected members of our community. Sometimes that might turn out being a hero. Most of the time though, courage is quieter. Courage is making a new neighbour feel at home, cooking soup for a friend who is sick, speaking out when someone is being bullied or hurt, sharing your sandwich with a friend at school who forgot her lunch, helping someone to ride a bike or picking up rubbish not because you dropped it but because it is the right thing to do. Ask the children if they can say what courage means to them.



Often we think about courage as being a big thing. Talk with the children about where we might see courage, in ourselves and in others? Perhaps some confusion comes from how we see the word courage. The word itself comes from the Latin *cor*, meaning heart. Courage comes from our hearts.

From the outside, the work that a superhero does looks courageous. From the inside it might feel like "just being me" or acting from the heart.

Some other questions to think about:

- I wonder if these two Quakers from the stories had anything in common? Perhaps they both cared about other people and wanted to help them?
- What do you think these two Quakers would have talked about if they have met each other?
- If someone was writing a testimony about you, what sorts of things would you like to be included? Remember that the testimony is not written to praise the person or show how good they were but to show how people's lives can be inspired and changed by God's love at work within them. God's grace can be at work in the big things and the small. It can be part of everything we do.

References & other resources

Quaker faith and practice 18:17 and 18:19

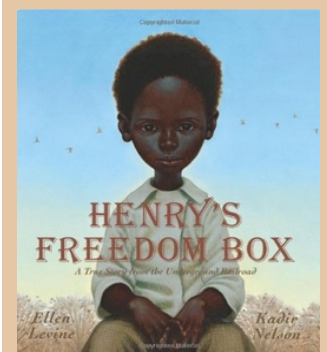
Issue 49 of *Journeys in the Spirit* offers suggestions for talking about death with children. Issue 82 is concerned with talking about grief.

See link:

<http://journeys.quaker.org.uk>

Henry's freedom box' tells the true story of a slave who knew a life of captivity wasn't right. He posted himself to freedom in Pennsylvania and worked to help abolish slavery.

(ISBN:043977733X)



Additional resource 104.A can be found at www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren

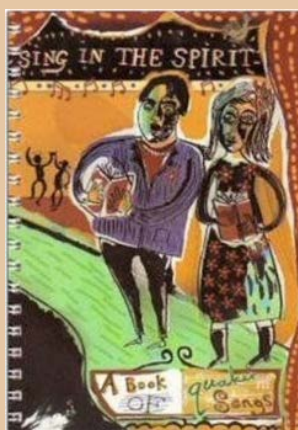
References & other resources

Making gift squares as testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of Friends – see Being Friends Together Cat. No T361.

<http://together.woodbrooke.org.uk/session.php?s=T361>

Series 4 of *Journeys in the Spirit* tells the stories of a number of other Quakers, some well-known and others less well-known.

<http://journeys.quaker.org.uk/files/Journeys-in-the-Spirit-Children-No-27.pdf>



book of Quaker Songs is available from the Quaker bookshop.

Email: quakercentre@quaker.org.uk

Tel: 020 7663 1030/1031

Respond

Bringing the stories in the testimonies to life

Use drama to bring the story of the testimony of Lucy Harris to life. You might like to build Lucy's boat. You could use large cardboard boxes or an upside down table for the hull, cardboard tubes for the mast and white fabric or paper for the sail.

Children could dress up as Lucy, the warlords and their followers and act out the story.

Use drama to bring the story of the testimony of Katy Riley to life.



You might like to imagine what Katy's neat little house and garden looked like. You could dress up as Katy Riley and her guests or the people she visited. What sort of clothes might they have worn in the 1950s, 60s or 70s? Or maybe have a tea party. You might like to invite some friends who don't usually come to Quaker meeting or some adults from your meeting.

Prepare and serve some dainty meals. Which foods might your guests enjoy? Which lovely books or pictures will you choose to share with your guests?

Preparing little notes of love

Talk about who might like to receive a little note of love from you. It might be a member of your family or a friend. Perhaps you could say thank you for something they have done to care for you and tell them how much you love them? It might be someone in your meeting. Perhaps there is someone who is unwell or someone who needs cheering up?

Like Katy Riley, you could decorate your note with drawings.

Songs of faithful lives

Look in songbooks to find songs about faithful lives to sing together. The book '*Sing in the spirit: a book of Quaker songs*' has a whole section about the faithful lives of some of the most well-known Quakers.

You might like to invite some musical adults from your meeting to sing with you and make some simple instruments by filling small boxes with beans, lentils or rice and then decorating them.

Living testimonies

Sometimes, when a Friend has died and we listen to a testimony to the grace of God in their lives, we are surprised to hear about the things that love has inspired them to do. We discover that we didn't know them as well as we thought we did. We don't have to wait until a Friend has died, however, to find out about how love is at work in their lives. Think about some of the Quakers that you know. They might be people in your own family, your own meeting or another meeting. You might like to invite some of them to visit the children's meeting. Ask them about the things that being a Quaker has encouraged or enabled them to do. Can you find a way to record their stories in words, pictures, poems or songs?

Reflect

Have enough time to come together and share as a group before the end of children's meeting.

Questions to think about:-

- How did exploring the testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of Lucy and Katy make us feel?
- Was it surprising to discover these stories in '*Quaker faith & practice*'?
- What could the adults in the meeting learn from hearing about the testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of Lucy and Katy? Would you like to share a play, song or something that you have made with them?

Encourage the children to share their thoughts and make firm plans to share with others if the children would like to do this.

Review

How did the children (and adults) respond to this topic? Were they able to identify with the idea of living a faithful life and the purpose of testimonies? Did the testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of Lucy E Harris and Katy Riley feel relevant to Quaker children today?

Are there any issues which some children might like to have the opportunity to explore further or talk about again at a later date?

Are there any issues that need to be followed up with parents/carers?

How can the children's responses to chapter 18 of '*Quaker faith & practice*' be shared with the adults in the meeting and with Britain Yearly Meeting as a whole?

This issue was written by Kathy Chandler and edited by Mel Cook and Howard Nurden.

Journeys in the Spirit is published in two formats on alternate months. One month the issue is on a theme with an easy to use structure set out in a four page booklet with additional online resources. The alternate month is a topical activity – something about the news or of seasonal interest.

Available from 1 August 2016: **Topical Activity - Holidays**

Available from 1 September 2016: **Issue 105: Social Responsibility** '*Quaker faith & practice*' 23. How we can get involved in helping others who are suffering in some way.

Materials available online are:

Current issue and additional resources

An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting

A simple plan for an all age Meeting for Worship

Also a 'How to use *Journeys in the Spirit*' guide; a link to special issues; an archive of previous issues; and a link to the *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth edition.

Go to:

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren and choose from the range of links in the sidebar.

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Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 104.A

Engage

Share the testimonies



Read the following edited testimonies from '*Quaker faith & practice*'.

Testimonies to the grace of God in the lives of two Quakers

Testimony concerning Lucy E Harris (1873-1962)

Lucy trained as a doctor and sailed for China. No situation daunted Lucy. There was fighting between Chinese warlords and it was inevitable that she should meet and have trouble with these unpleasant characters. Her utter fearlessness in dealing with such difficulties sprang from her deep faith in God, not a cosy belief that nothing dangerous would happen to her, but a firm belief that in whatever did happen, she would have the presence of God with her. One day, the warlords with their followers were lined up on each side of a river. Lucy, a tiny woman with a firm, strong, clear voice, stood in a boat in the middle of the river, shouting to them. She insisted that they should stop fighting and go their separate ways. They turned themselves about and went.



Testimony concerning Katy Riley (written 1981)

What Katy was is written in the hearts of all who loved her. Her hospitality was phenomenal, the neat little house and garden providing rest and beauty. She delighted in helping her guests to relax, showing them lovely books or pictures, serving meals daintily. It seemed a joy to her to live for others, and she regularly visited the lonely, the elderly and the sick. She sent little notes of love, always decorated with an appropriate drawing, and hundreds of such messages are treasured by many people. If someone ill or housebound needed her, Katy would go for weeks or even months to stay with them, though it was hard for her, as she loved her own home and meeting best.