



Soul Matters

Crossing Paths

Walking the Path of
Quakerism

February 2019 - Trust

CONTENTS

Welcome	Page 2
Weekly Sessions	
Map Sunday Getting a View of The Terrain	Page 3
Tack Sunday Quakerism & Trust	Page 13
Summit Day The Visit	Page 19
Lake Sunday Reflecting on The Visit	Page 23
Handouts	
Handout #1 - 8 Practices	Page 29
Handout #2 - Interview Questions	Page 30

Welcome

Welcome to the Crossing Paths' exploration of Quakerism and this month's theme: "A People of Trust"

Quakers are known for their emphasis on silence, simplicity, honesty, and peace. As I write this, I am immersed in a Quaker institution and reflecting on Quaker connections in my own family in the Philadelphia area. I have been visiting my parents in Kendal/Crosslands, a Quaker retirement community, also the home of many UU's. My brother and nephews attended Friends Central High School and Westtown High School. As a high schooler during the Vietnam War, my pacifist Quaker friends gave me deep insights into justice and injustice. Throughout these many encounters with Quakerism, I've been grateful to notice how close Quaker values are to my UU values. Their emphasis on the Inner Divine Light in every person echoes our UU belief in the inherent worth and dignity of all. Their commitment to honor the authority of all voices fits well with our commitment to Beloved Community and freedom of the pew.

I also love the challenge that Quakers have offered me. Their practice of silence and patient waiting before speaking helps me reign in the opinionated and talkative part of me. Their emphasis on simplicity gently makes me assess how easily I slip into the materialistic and busy culture around me.

We hope you and your youth also experience such meaningful points of similarity and challenge this month. As with all the religions we've been exploring, it's truly a gift to be changed by our encounter with other faiths.

We want to stress one leader note: Quaker silent worship is a powerful experience. It's also a challenging practice for those of us who don't regularly engage in it. Recognizing this, we've expanded the worship for each session to include longer and longer moments of stillness and silence. It's our way of helping the youth practice silence so they are able to get more out of the experience when they make their visit. So, expect that the worship portion of each session to last longer than usual. Which means that the activities following worship will be a bit shorter.

Finally, we hope the Quaker emphasis on silence and simplicity washes over you this month in surprising ways. May it leave all of us feeling closer and more connected to our own "still small voice."

Thanks, as always, for letting us be your partners and walk these journeys with you in spirit!

Katie, on behalf of the entire Soul Matters team

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Week 1

Map Sunday

Purpose

- Introduce youth to some of the basic beliefs and practices of Quakerism, using our Crossing Paths' binoculars/lenses

Preparation & Leader Notes

Remembering Humility

As always, remember that the aim of Map Sunday is to “get a glimpse” of each religion. There is no way to capture the fullness of these rich religions in a session or two. So as a leader, you will need to help your youth remember that there is still a lot about each religion left to explore and we need to be humble about what we are learning. It might be helpful to remind your youth about our second practice of welcoming: “always be curious” - i.e. always be open and never assume you understand something fully.

Leader Background Resources

These short videos and articles are recommended background information for leading the session and grounding yourself in Quaker history and core beliefs. If you want an even broader exposure to the tradition, you can read ahead and explore the Leader Background Resources in the other sessions.

Top Three

- Brief Overview of History and Beliefs: <http://quakerinfo.org/quakerism/Qreligm>
- What is a Quaker?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I63xA-VZGXw>
- A (Very) Brief History of the Quakers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJXdICz1nA4>

Dig Deeper

- Quaker FAQ's: <https://www.fgcquaker.org/explore/faqs-about-quakers>
- How Quakerism Began: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmL_GhnXSJQ&index=130&list=PL-r97fEzGE2Th6OgcDQIY14jMi0wknb8u
- The Six Quaker “Testimonies” (S.P.I.C.E.S.): <https://www.friendsjournal.org/s-p-i-c-e-s-quaker-testimonies/>
- Quaker Nourishment for the Soul | Have a Little Faith with Zach Anner: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3v3sHk1ULY>
- How Quakers Got Their Name: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2IWDwmaR38>

Dinner and Drive Time Tip (Email to parents ahead of time):

Before:

- *Watch the below video with your youth and share your reactions. What did you learn? What surprised you about Quaker religion? What moved you most about the stories shared?*
- Quaker Nourishment for the Soul | Have a Little Faith with Zach Anner:
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3v3sHk1ULY>

After:

- *In our worship time this week, we will introduce the Quaker practice of silence and listening to one's "inner light," "inner teacher" or "still small voice within." The youth will be invited to share a time when being still or silent enabled them to figure out something they were struggling with or helped them hear their own inner voice or intuition. Consider engaging your youth in a discussion about the role of silence and stillness in your life, sharing how it has helped you with critical decisions in your life or helped you better hear the voice of your deepest self.*

For You:

Spend some time with the below resources to enrich and expand your own understanding of the Quakers:

- Brief Overview of History and Beliefs: <http://quakerinfo.org/quakerism/Qreligm>
- What is a Quaker?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I63xA-VZGXw>
- A (Very) Brief History of the Quakers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJXdICz1nA4>

Pre-Session To Do List:

- Send out the Dinner and Drive Time Tip. See above.
- Create this week's graffiti board. Core question: What are Quakers?
- Make sure you have the technology needed to play the YouTube videos that are part of this session.

Session

Getting a View of the Terrain: Quakers (The Society of Friends)

Entering - Graffiti Board Writing

As youth enter the room invite youth to engage the graffiti board. Encourage symbols, words, drawings. These can be representations of Quakers, words or feelings and experiences that youth have in relationship to The Religious Society of Friends/Quakers.

*This Week's Core Question:
What are Quakers?*

Gathering & Centering - Worship (18 min, including silence)

Centering Sound

Invite everyone to calm and center themselves. In honor of the Quaker commitment to silence, consider not using a chime or bell this week. Simply invite the youth to center themselves in silence and end the silence with "Amen."

Lighting the Chalice

*We light this chalice in gratitude for the path we share, a path that guides us
back to our deepest self,
back to each other,
And back to life's gifts and joy.*

Welcome & Lead-In to Centering

Leader talking points, in script form:

- Welcome to Map Sunday and our exploration of this month's religion: Quakerism.
- Map Sunday is when we "survey" the religion and use our "binoculars/lenses" to get a glimpse of it before we make our visit and experience it directly.
- A core belief of the Quakers is that there is an "inner divine light" in each of us, through which people can connect with and receive guidance directly from God. It is also referred to as "the inner teacher" or "the still small voice within." This is very similar to what we UUs mean when we talk about the first of our "ropes": "Listening to and connecting with our deepest selves."
- This belief in the inner voice was radical in the mid-1600's when Quakerism emerged. By claiming that God and God's voice was within everyone, they threatened the idea that people could only connect with God and God's wisdom through church authorities or the Bible.
- Quakers believe we can best hear this inner voice of God by being silent, still and practicing deep listening. Sitting in silence is what many Quakers in the United States do as their worship. Yes, that's right. No sermons, no readings, no singing or very little. Just sitting in silence until one hears God speaking to them and then sometimes people standing up to share what that "still small voice" said. As one historian puts it, "Without priests or hymns, Quakers listen for the word of God in each other."
- To honor the way silence and stillness are central to the Quakers, let's listen to a Quaker song about stillness and then sit in silence together.
- This is not just a way to honor the Quaker practice of silence, but it is also a way for us to begin practice getting comfortable with longer periods of silence. When we visit the Quaker meeting house for worship

in a couple of weeks, we will be asked to sit in silence for an entire hour. It's not easy. So consider today our first step in working toward the full hour we will soon experience.

- As you listen to the song and sit in silence, think of a time when being still or silent enabled you to figure out something you were struggling with or helped you hear your own inner voice or intuition. In short, use the silence to remember a time that silence helped you or "spoke to you."
- Let's listen and reflect.

Music For Centering

"Be Still and Cool" by George Fox (Sung by Paulette Meier), 1:08 min

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0YigR7uvpA&list=PL-r97fEzGE2RpHMyxZZgrYpHuOqeJRmDK&index=6>

[FOLLOW WITH 2-3 MINUTES OF SILENCE]

Remind the youth about the question to think about during the silence: "When did stillness or silence help you figure out something you were struggling with?"

Thematic Check-in

Invite the group to share, in a few sentences, when silence or stillness helped them figure out a struggle or "hear" their inner voice.

After everyone has responded to the reflection question, ask the youth about how it felt to sit in silence for your chosen length of time. Given that it is significantly shorter than an hour, ask them how they imagine it will be to do it for one hour.

After the sharing, leader expresses gratitude for everyone's sharing.

Closing

"In the rest of our time together and in the days ahead, **May the ropes be with you.** May we stay close to our deepest and truest selves. May we keep connected to each other. And may we remember to lean into life's joy. Blessed be. Amen"

Extinguish the Chalice

Leader note: If you use a real flame, our advice is to extinguish it now to prevent accidental tipping over or pyro play with hot wax. If you use a tea light, you may wish to extinguish it at the end of the session during the closing words.

Taking in the Terrain

A Glimpse of Quakerism through the Crossing Paths Binoculars

Introduction

Explain that the focus of today is to “get a glimpse” of the world of the Quakers. Stress that there is no way to capture the fullness of these rich religious traditions in a session or two. So today is about impressions and partial views and learning a bit about the Quakers before our visit. Remember our second practice of welcoming: “always be curious” - i.e. always be open and never assume you understand something fully.

Sizing Up the Terrain (5 min.)

The Origin and Size of the Quakers

You can keep this simple or get creative. The easiest and more time-efficient approach is to just share the basic facts verbally. If you want to take it to the next level, consider placing a large sheet of paper on the wall and writing the basic stats on it. This will allow the youth to visually compare the size and location of the various religions. Consider getting a map for your room to capture and compare the size and location of the various religions.

When

Quakerism began during a period of religious upheaval in England during the mid-1600s, as people questioned the established church and sought new ways to understand Christianity.

How Many?

In 2007 there were approximately 359,000 adult members of Quaker meetings in the world. A 2012 assessment showed that there were 76,000 in the United States. That’s around a third of the size of UUs (There are about 200,000 UUs in the U.S.)

Around 89% of Quakers worldwide belong to the "evangelical" and "programmed" branches of Quakerism. These Quakers worship in services with singing and a prepared message from the Bible, coordinated by a pastor. Around 11% of Friends practice “waiting worship,” or “unprogrammed worship” (more commonly known today as “Meeting for Worship”), where the order of service is not planned in advance, is predominantly silent, and may include unprepared vocal ministry from those present.

(Sources: <https://www.fqcquaker.org/explore/faqs-about-quakers#start> & <http://www.quakerinfo.org/resources/statistics>)

Where

There are various branches of the Religious Society of Friends. All of the branches are represented in the United States. In other parts of the world, un-programmed Friends (who practice silent worship and don’t have pastors) are most common in Europe and in former colonies of Britain; programmed Friends (with prepared worship services and pastors) are most common in Africa and South America.

(Source: <https://www.fqcquaker.org/explore/faqs-about-quakers#start>)

Here’s a more detailed [distribution](#) of Quakers around the world:

- Africa = 52%
- North America = 20%
- Caribbean and Latin America = 15%
- Europe and Middle East = 7%
- Asia-West Pacific = 6%.

Name (5 min.)

Quaker or the Religious Society of Friends

Explain

Why are They Called “Quakers”?

Formally, Quakers call themselves the Religious Society of Friends. But most of the time they shorten it to “Friends” or “Quakers.”

The term “Quaker” arose as a popular nickname used to ridicule this new religious group when it emerged in seventeenth century England. One story explains that the founder George Fox was brought before an English court for heresy and the judge asked “Aren’t you afraid of this court? Why aren’t you quaking in your shoes?” To which George Fox replied, “It is you, sir, who should be quaking in fear of the authority of God.” As time went on, Quakers added meaning to the term as a way highlighting the way they “quaked” and shook with the light of God inside them.

Source: <https://www.fqcquaker.org/explore/faqs-about-quakers#start>

Many people still think that Quakers and Quaker Oats are somehow connected. The company is not connected to Quakerism. The early owners selected the Quaker name as a symbol of good quality and honest value, which were attributed to Quakers. However, the Quaker Oats man DOES look like portraits of William Penn, the Quaker who founded Pennsylvania.

Leader Resources (Background and support for leaders so they can explain in their own words)

- How Quakers Got Their Name: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2IWDwmaR38>
- A Short History: <https://www.georgefox.edu/about/history/quakers.html>
- The Pure and Honest Quaker Oats Guy; a Biography: <https://triviahappy.com/articles/the-pure-and-honest-quaker-oats-guy-a-biography>

The Problem in the World & The Solution (27 min)

Problem:

Disconnection from the Divine Light Within

Solution:

Stillness, Silence and Discernment to Discover the Inner Light

Leader Introduction

Of all the religions we studied so far, Quakerism uniquely emphasizes practice over worldview and beliefs. In other words, if you ask a Quaker to define Quakerism, they will likely talk more about what they *do* than what they *believe*.

To the degree that they do have a central belief, it is that there is an “inner light” or “piece of God” in every person and that this inner piece of Divinity makes us all equal and has the ability to guide us toward truth and a meaningful life. Quakers would likely then go on to talk about all the practices they do to stay in touch with and listen to that inner light, such as silent worship, decisions by consensus and “[clearness committees](#).” In a sense, they are a religion built around the practice of using silence to hear the voice within. Sounds simple, but Quakers would say it is one of the hardest things to do, and one of the most important things we can do. From their perspective, the world is full of voices that lead us astray and separate us from right living, each other and our true selves. Through silence, stillness and inward listening, we can find a trustworthy “voice” that helps us fix this problem of being disconnected from ourselves, each other and goodness.

This belief in “the inner light in each of us” also leads to some other radically counter-cultural views. First, if everyone has “God” inside them, then everyone is equal. This led to the Quakers being early leaders in the struggle against slavery and has positioned them as social justice leaders throughout their history. Second, their belief that everyone has direct access to the Divine voice within led them to resist leader figures and outside authorities. This has resulted in many Quakers not having ministers who lead the communities. It has also led them to privilege the authority of one’s inner voice over the authority of the Bible. You can see why this got them into trouble with traditional Christian authorities!

With all this in mind, you can see how complex the idea of “the inner light” is. It puts inward listening at the center of your life. It pushes you toward a radical view of equality. And it challenges you to prioritize the wisdom of the group over the authority of individuals. These three implications or components of belief in the inner light (inward listening, equality and collective wisdom) are essential to understanding Quakers. To honor that, we will focus on them in the rest of this session. Feel free to use this leader introduction as a guide/template for your own introduction to this session for the youth.

Further Background:

Top Three:

- Quakers and the Still, Small Voice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFvWxx9taEE>
- What is the Inner Light?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0SLPW0JHsU>
- What to Expect in Quaker Meeting for Worship: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxjH4sa2RFI>

Dig Deeper

- Quaker Silence: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZG1bcWwDb34&list=PL-r97fEzGE2Th6OgcDQIY14jMi0wknb8u&index=127>
- What Do Quakers Do in Silent Worship?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwHvgO2kxWM>

Engaging the Solution - Activity #1: The Inner Light & Listening

Explain

Stress to your youth that listening to one's "inner light" (or as UUs would put it, one's deepest self) takes effort and concentration. And practice. In honor of that, let's practice by playing some listening games!

Note: You might also want to remind the youth that listening is one of the Eight Practices of Welcoming that we used during our Crossing Paths visits.

Engage

Listen and Draw Game

- Place group members into pairs and have them sit back to back.
- Give one student in the pair a unique picture with a lot of simple shapes drawn on it. I prefer to draw my own pictures with randomly placed hearts, flowers, stars, houses, stick figures, etc. Put these shapes in different places, angles, and with extra features as desired.
- Give the second student in the pair a blank piece of paper.
- The student with the picture must dictate to his/her/their partner how to draw the picture, correctly drawing the shapes and placing them at the right angles. The drawer must **listen** carefully and follow the directions. Make sure to emphasize no cheating or peeking!
- When finished, change the pictures around the groups and have the partners switch roles. When everyone has drawn once, the team with the most similar pictures wins!

<https://busyteacher.org/14387-how-to-improve-listening-skills-8-activities.html>

Listen for "B" Game (energy releaser!)

Invite the group to squat down on the floor. Sing together "[My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean](#)." Everyone must **listen** for words starting with "B." When you hear one, everyone jump up in the air. It gets interesting when the chorus starts (Bring back, bring back oh, bring back my Bonnie to me, to me"). Just sing the first verse and chorus a few times.

Variation: For those with different mobility, offer the song raising arms or legs on the "B" words instead of jumping. Can be done from a sitting position.

Musical Chairs Game

Play this [classic game](#) to the tune of the Quaker song about founder George Fox. Stop the song at random places. Players must **listen** for the music to stop, then find a chair to sit in:

The George Fox Song - "Walk in the Light" (song starts at minute 2:25)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iz5LgElg61U>

Add On or Alternative: Use this Musical Chairs video which stops randomly on its own:

Musical Chairs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJDWKvsmhss>

Add On or Alternative: [Cooperative Musical Chairs](#)

Remove one chair and invite the group to figure out how to fit everyone on the remaining chairs. You must listen for the music to stop before you figure out how to fit everyone on the diminishing number of chairs.

Engaging the Solution - Activity #2: The Inner Light & Equality

Explain

Besides giving each person a direct link to the divine, the inner light also - for Quakers - means all people are equal. They believed that if everyone has “God” or “the divine light” inside them, then everyone is of value and should be honored as equal. This led to the Quakers being early leaders in the struggle against slavery and has positioned them as social justice leaders throughout their history.

Be sure to highlight how our UU belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person leads UUs to a belief in equality in a similar way and has inspired our work for justice as well.

Engage

Show the youth this video to provide a more detailed sense of how belief in the inner light has led Quakers to work for justice, question authority and stand up for equality:

A (Very) Brief History of Quakers (5:20 min): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJXdICz1nA4>

Short Discussion: Ask the youth what struck them about the video and, in particular, what similarities they see between the Quakers and UUs.

Engaging the Solution - Activity #3: The Inner Light & Collective Wisdom

Explain & Engage

In addition to inspiring their belief in equality, Quaker understandings of the inner light also leads them to value group decisions over individual leaders. If everyone has access to the Divine voice then everyone has access to the truth and should have a say. No one leader should be seen as having special wisdom or authority. This reasoning has resulted in many Quakers not having ministers. It has also led them to use consensus in all their decision making

Use these videos to familiarize yourself with the Quaker view of leadership, collective wisdom and decision-making:

What is the Quaker Approach to Leadership? - <http://bit.ly/2nCiSYr>

How Quakers Make Decisions (It's Not Just Consensus!) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjrBg1VvyZ8>

The key point here is that if everyone has a piece of the divine light/wisdom in them, then no one person has all the answers or can tell the group what to do. The group has to work as a whole and honor everyone's contribution when figuring out a problem or making a decision.

After explaining this connection between the inner light and group decision-making, invite the youth to engage it experientially with the following activity:

Data Processing Game: <http://dbp.theatredance.utexas.edu/content/data-processing>

Reflection: Spend some time afterward taking to the youth about where they saw the various Quaker values show up in the game:

- Collective decision-making
- Honoring everyone's input
- No single leader with authority over the group

Graffiti Board - Filling in the Gaps (3 min.)

Invite the youth to add a picture or word to the graffiti board, picking one thing that engaged them most about today's session. What did they learn about the Quakers that they think is most important to add. Remember to use markers that are a different color than was used to fill or the board at the start of the session, so you can continue to track learning over the sessions.

Looking Ahead - What to do ahead of time or expect (2 min.)

Thank the youth for their participation this week. Note one thing that you particularly appreciated or enjoyed about the session you just did with them.

Remind the youth what is happening next week and make sure they know what they have to do ahead of time. Note one thing that you are particularly looking forward to.

Closing Words (1 min)

"In the days ahead, **May the ropes be with you.** May we stay close to our deepest and truest selves. May we keep connected to each other. And may we remember to lean into life's joy. Blessed be. Amen"

Week 2

Tack Sunday

What Does It Mean to be a People of Trust... for the Quakers?

Purpose

- Explore how Quakers think about and engage the theme of trust.

Preparation & Leader Notes

Dinner and Drive Time Tips (Email to parents prior to the meeting):

Before:

- *Have some fun and watch this video with your youth. Don't hesitate to ask your youth about the references made in the video. After last Sunday, they will be able to fill you in on the Quaker history referenced in this parody!*
- What Does George Fox Say (a Quaker parody of Ylvis' "What Does the Fox Say")
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhsvqbCiaAs>

After:

- *As a way of preparing for a full hour of sitting in silence in Quaker worship, we will expand the time of silence in our worship this week. So, after this week's session, take some time and ask your youth about their experience of trying to sit in silence for extended periods of time. What's hard? What's meaningful? Is it getting easier? What happens for you in the midst of the silence?*

For You:

- *To connect our learning about Quakers with our monthly church theme of Trust, we will learn about how Quakers put their trust in a decision-making method called "finding the sense of the meeting." Spend some time learning about it for yourself and thinking about how it might invite you to think about or see your own decision-making methods differently. Here are some videos to help you reflect:*
- How Quakers Make Decisions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjrBg1VvyZ8>
- Why Quakers Value the Process over Outcome: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aF8PABPq8AA>
- *Spend some time thinking about the role of silence in your own life by watching the below video about Quaker silence. How does silence connect with your daily living? Your spiritual life? How do you make room for it? Do you want to make more room for it?*
 - Quaker Silence: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZG1bcWwDb34&list=PL-r97fEzGE2Th6OgcDQIY14jMi0wknb8u&index=127>
 - What is the Inner Light?:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0SLPW0JHsU>

Pre-Session To Do List:

- Send out the Dinner and Drive Time Tip. See above.
- Make sure you have the technology needed to play the YouTube videos that are part of this session.
- Optional, snack provisions if that is the Decision Making Question to be used as an example.
- Copies of Handouts #1 and #2.

Session

Entering - Graffiti Board Writing

Same Core Question: **What are Quakers?**

As youth enter the room, direct them to check out the graffiti board as a way to remind themselves of what they've been learning. Using a new color for the markers, invite them to add a new item or embellish an item they've already put up.

Gathering & Centering - Worship (25 min including silence)

Centering Sound

Invite everyone to calm and center themselves. In honor of the Quaker commitment to silence, consider not using a chime or bell this week. Simply invite the youth to center themselves in silence and end the silence with "Amen."

Lighting the Chalice

*We light this chalice in gratitude for the path we share, a path that guides us
back to our deepest self,
back to each other,
And back to life's gifts and joy.*

Welcome

Suggested Script/Talking Points:

- Welcome to Tack Sunday and to our continued exploration of this month's religion: The Quakers. Today we are going to explore - or "tack up" with - how Quakers relate to our monthly theme here at church: A People of Trust
- Last week we talked about how Quakers believe that each person has a divine inner light or inner voice inside them.
- We emphasized how Quakers trust their inner voice to guide them personally.
- Today we're going to explore how they also trust that inner voice to guide **others**. Or to put it another way, Quakers honor each other's inner voice so much that they only make decisions when all voice agree. It is similar to consensus decision making but is less about getting everyone to agree and more about everyone agreeing because they feel they have, together, found what God is trying to say to the group.
- Obviously, this is very different than the way UUs and most other groups make decisions. We most often use a "majority wins" approach where the most voices can trump and ignore the minority voices. To talk of finding and following "the voice of the majority" is also obviously different than finding and following "the voice of God."
- So today we're going to explore the difference between trusting Quaker consensus and trusting majority rule.
- But before we explore how Quakers listen to each other's inner voices through decision making, let's use our worship to explore how they listen to each other's voices during worship. It's important to remember that Quakers don't just trust their inner voices to lead them personally; they also trust their inner voice to lead and guide each other. This is why Quakers don't just sit in silence in worship and meditate quietly like most eastern meditation. Instead they sometimes break the silence and share what their inner light/voice is saying to them *when they've carefully decided that others need to hear what their inner voice has to say*. This is called "Speaking out of the Silence" and it's only done when the speaker perceives his/her/their message as "a gift from the Holy Spirit."

So with this in mind, let's sit in silence together and think about what you've learned about trusting others. While you're thinking about that, if you decide that your thoughts might be "a gift" to others in the room, then briefly share them out loud. No need to ask permission, just take a deep breath and then speak into the silence.

Additional Support:

Here are a few links to help you deepen your own knowledge about "speaking out of the silence" and to help you explain it to your youth:

- <http://www.capecodquakers.org/silencespeech.html>
- <https://www.fgcquaker.org/cloud/announcements/flowchart-knowing-when-speak-meeting-worship>
- https://www.fgcquaker.org/system/files/cloud_attachments/WorshipFlow.pdf

Note: As a leader, you may have to be the first one to speak out of the silence so that others have a model and are more comfortable trying it out.

No Music for Centering, Just Silence

[5-8 MINUTES OF SILENCE]

Closing

"In the rest of our time together and in the days ahead, **May the ropes be with you.** May we stay close to our deepest and truest selves. May we keep connected to each other. And may we remember to lean into life's joy. Blessed be. Amen"

Extinguish the Chalice

Leader note: If you use a flame, our advice is to extinguish it now to prevent accidental tipping over or pyro play with hot wax. If you use a tea light, you may wish to extinguish it at the end of the session during the closing words.

Post Worship Reflection

Have your group discuss what worship was like for them. How did the longer period of silence feel? Any worries about doing it for an hour when we visit a Quaker service? Any tips for each other about what make it easier to sit in silence or what helps keep you focused and listening? Did the additional of "speaking out of the silence" make the experience harder, easier, more intimidating? How did you decide if what you had to say was really "a gift for others"? Did the criteria of only speaking if it was a gift make you hold back something you were thinking about?

Main Activity: Trusting Consensus, the Sense of the Meeting & the Group’s “Higher Voice” (25 min)

Explain

We’ve already mentioned how each individual Quaker trusts their own inner voice. In addition, they believe in and put great trust in a higher wisdom called the voice of the group. The way they discover that is through a process of group spiritual reflection called “the sense of the meeting.” This is not a competitive vote. It is discerning what the group is called to do *by the voice of God*.

Leaders can use the below resources to deepen their understanding and develop their own way of explaining “the sense of the meeting” and Quaker consensus to your youth:

Top Two

- Why Quakers Value the Process over Outcome <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aF8PABPq8AA>
- How Quakers Make Decisions (It’s Not Just Consensus!) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjrBg1VvyZ8>

Digging Deeper

- Consensus Handbook: <https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/handbookweb.pdf>
- Finding the Sense of the Meeting: <https://theperfectresponse.pages.tcnj.edu/2015/09/17/quaker-meetings/>
- When Quakers Disagree: <https://www.friendsjournal.org/2010090/>

Some Helpful Frames:

“ Friends decision-making encourages communities to collectively to seek truth for the community – rather than pooling the needs of individuals. Sense-of-the-meeting and consensus are often confused because they have in common a non-voting process. One way to contrast them is to ask, “What is the question that calls for a decision?”

Majority Rule Model: “How do we vote?”

Consensus Model: “What can we agree to?”

Sense-of-the-meeting Model: “How are we led?”

- from <https://blog.fsmn.org/2012/08/understanding-quaker-decision-making/>

UU’s often use simple voting as a way to govern. Some use consensus. Our 6th Principle in adult language says, “The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process.” We UU’s like the voting of the democratic process. In children’s language, we say it in two ways:

1. Each person has a vote. (Majority rules)
2. Each Person has a say. (Consensus)

Perhaps the most important and accessible way to experience this is to aim for consensus as a contrast to voting, then experiment with “Sense of the Meeting” but also understand that since we are not Quakers, the actual process isn’t easily available to us (and isn’t appropriate to do unless one’s personal spirituality does affirm an inner light). Maybe most importantly, it might help to explain that the way trust comes into this is that consensus asks people to trust each other with the power to block the group. Which is very different from UU voting democracy, which trusts the majority with the power to trump the minority.

Engage

We plan this exercise for 25 minutes because consensus takes time. Stress this to your group so they are prepared to settle in!!

Activity: Trying on Three Types of Decision Making

- Come up with a decision that needs to be made by the group....
- It might be what kind of snack to have after the service is over (with provisions ready). Or what game to play next? Or where to go after the next visit - a coffee shop or ice cream?
- Then do three rounds of making that decision with these three different approaches:
 1. Vote on 2 solutions and tally the results. Which solution gets the most votes?
 2. Use the consensus exercise below. What can we agree to?
 3. Try the Quaker "Sense of the Meeting" question - how are we led?

Additional Guidance for using the Consensus Model

Generate several solutions to the question as a group and write them on the board or paper so everyone can see, i.e. we will visit Starbucks after we attend the Quaker Meeting next week. We will not go to a coffee house, we will try Village Inn, etc. We will go to Ziggis. We will go to MacDonald's.

Invite each person to hold up their fingers according to their feelings about the solutions:

1 finger -- "I can say an unqualified yes to the decision. I am satisfied that the decision is an expression of the wisdom of the group."

2 fingers -- "I find the decision perfectly acceptable."

3 fingers -- "I can live with the decision even though I'm not especially enthusiastic about it."

4 fingers -- "I do not fully agree with the decision and need to register my view about why. However, I will not block the decision because I trust the wisdom of the group."

5 fingers -- "I do not agree with the decision and feel the need to stand in the way of this decision being accepted."

6 fingers -- "I feel that we have no clear sense of unity in the group. We need to do more work before consensus can be reached." from

https://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/greatmeetings/greatmeetings026.shtml

Say that John blocks the decision, saying that he doesn't like going to Starbucks and would rather frequent a locally owned shop. This will start a dialogue about the solution, with possible alternatives. Then offer another time to hold up fingers, until there is group consensus about where to go.

The group must trust each other and offer the power to each person to block the decision by holding up 6 fingers, without punishment. Eventually, a solution will arise in which everyone finds consensus. That is, it may not be their first choice, but it is a choice they can accept and live with.

Additional Guidance for trying the "Sense of the Meeting" process

Then, take a deep breath and ask how the group might do it the way Quakers do. Try to find a sense of the meeting. How might God/Life be speaking to us as a group. How might God/ Life be trying to lead us together? Are they being called to stay away from fast food? Are they being called to support local business? Does

God/Life call them to find a quiet place to meet and share? Does God/Life call them to save the money and donate it to the Quaker Meeting or cause? This may or may not work but take a risk and engage them in how consensus might feel different from a spiritual calling.

Graffiti Board - Filling in the Gaps (3 min)

Invite the youth to add a picture or word to the graffiti board, picking one thing that engaged them most about today's session. What did they learn that they think is most important to add?

Remember to use markers that are a different color than was used to fill or the board at the start of the session, so you can continue to track learning over the sessions.

Looking Ahead - What to do ahead of time or expect (5 min)

Thank the youth for their participation this week. Note one thing that you particularly appreciated or enjoyed about the session you just did with them.

Remind the youth that next week is THE VISIT! Share a bit about where you are going, go over logistics and stress any rules that will need observed-e.g., let them know about clothing expectations.

Tacking up our Eight Practices of Welcome

Hand out the list of the Eight Practices of Welcome, Handout #1. Remind the youth that we are using them during our visit next week and will be reviewing how well we do. So ask them to please make time to think about them during the week. Which one do you particularly need to remember and work on for yourself?

Choosing an Interview Question (either now, or before you leave for your visit on Summit Sunday)

If you are able to include a conversation with a leader as part of your visit, we suggest that you bring questions for the youth to ask. We have included the Interview Questions at the end of this packet as part of the preparation for the visit, labeled Handout #2. We suggest that you ask the youth which question they would like to ask. Be flexible to allow youth to ask their own questions, paraphrase the question from the Handout in their own words, or ask it straight out.

(Remember that we also recommend sending the list of questions ahead of time to the faith leaders you are going to interview. This will allow them to prepare. You might also want to let them know that the youth will be taking turns asking their favorite questions from the list or ones they have generated themselves.)

Closing Words (1 min.)

"In the days ahead, **May the ropes be with you.** May we stay close to our deepest and truest selves. May we keep connected to each other. And may we remember to lean into life's joy. Blessed be. Amen"

Week 3

Summit Day

(The Visit)

Purpose

- Get a direct experience of the Quakers with a visit.
- Engage and use our Eight Practices of Welcoming.

Preparation & Leader Notes

Dinner and Drive Time Tips (Email to parents prior to the meeting):

Before:

- *Talk to your youth about the 8 practices of welcoming and how they might use them in their visit.*
- *Remind youth to bring an offering. We recommend an amount of \$_____.*
- *Remind your youth about dress requirements. [Leader note: tailor this bullet to the visit]*

After:

- *Ask your youth to share their favorite part of the visit.*
- *Reflect with them on your own experiences with and understanding of the Quakers. Share your assumptions and stereotypes and ask your youth how their experience relates to those assumptions and past experiences.*

For You:

- *Spend some time learning about Quaker worship using these videos:*
- **What to Expect in Quaker Meeting for Worship:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxjH4sa2RF>
- **My First Time At Quaker Meeting:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNud9i1Ks2Y&list=PL-r97fEzGE2Th6OgcDQIY14jMi0wknb8u&index=57>
- **Who is Quaker Meeting For?**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7NCyb6o650&list=PL-r97fEzGE2Th6OgcDQIY14jMi0wknb8u&index=109>

Pre-Visit To Do List:

- Arrange for and prepare the drivers. Make sure the drivers:
 - Have the address of the destination and a phone number to call if there are problems.
 - Have a list of who is in their car and their emergency contact numbers.
 - Are familiar with and comply with congregational safety guidelines, such as a license and proof of insurance on record.
- Send Interview Questions to faith leader, optional.
- Make sure to collect signed permission slips from group members, with all relevant contact information and emergency numbers. Make a copy to leave at the church, and a copy to bring on the trip.
- Let parents know the approximate time of return and post it on the door of your meeting room.
- Prepare to post a “We Will Return Soon” note in case someone comes late, such as “Sorry we missed you. The Crossing Paths group is visiting _____. We will return at _____.”
- Bring offering money for each group member or remind them to bring some
- Consider purchasing or bringing a gift for your host. Perhaps an interfaith poster or calendar.
- Make sure you have collected and clarified all the rules & expectations for your visit. You will share this information before you leave your church on Summit Sunday. Rules and expectations include:
 - the name of the faith community you are visiting. (e.g., First Congregational Church of...)
 - the religion’s name for their house of worship. (e.g., temple, church, mosque...)
 - what the religious leader is called and how they should be addressed (e.g., “They are call a minister and they should be addressed as Rev. Jones or Pastor Jones.”)
 - other behaviors that should be observed (e.g., expect dress, silence in certain spaces, when one can and when one shouldn’t participate in a ritual, etc.)
 - When and if it is appropriate to take pictures with phones. (Remember that we want to have some select moments when photos are gathered so they can be used in the end of year scrapbook or video)

Session - Visit

Before You Go

Before you leave, gather as a group at your home church and do the following:

Choosing an Interview Question (if you didn't do this on Tack Sunday previously)

If you are able to include a conversation with a leader as part of your visit, we suggest that you bring questions for the youth to ask. We have included the Interview Questions at the end of this packet as part of the preparation for the visit, labeled Handout #2. We suggest that you ask the youth which question they would like to ask. Be flexible to allow youth to ask their own questions, paraphrase the question from the Handout in their own words, or ask it straight out.

Remembering to be a Good Guest:

Leader reviews basic information and guidelines about how to be respectful during the visit:

1. Share the name of the faith community you are visiting. (e.g., First Congregational Church of...)
2. Share the religion's name for their house of worship. (e.g., temple, church, mosque...)
3. Tell them what the religious is called and how they should be addressed (e.g., "They are call a minister and they should be addressed as Rev. Jones or Pastor Jones.")
4. Review other behaviors that should be observed (e.g., silence in certain spaces, when one can and when one shouldn't participate in a ritual, etc.)
5. Make sure everyone's dress is appropriate and honors the expectations of the tradition you are visiting. If someone has forgotten, address the situation according to the understandings you've made ahead of time.
6. Share when and if it is appropriate to take pictures with phones. (Remember that we want to have some strategic moments when photos are gathered so they can be used in the end of year scrapbook or video)
7. Share expectations about texting and use of smartphones.
8. Remind them that they are guests and will be representing Unitarian Universalism to your hosts
9. Go over the travel plans and rules:
 - Assign participants to a car and make sure they know to return in the same car.
 - Be respectful of their drivers and cars.
 - Give emergency contact numbers to drivers.

Packing Up Our Eight Practices: Gather in your church foyer or parking lot before you go. Move together in a circle and share a blessing based on the Eight Practices of Welcoming. We recommend that you print out this blessing, so the youth have the Eight Practices physically available. Here's one version of a blessing you could do. Do it as a group by each person taking turns reading one line:

*Leader: Let us take a breath and pause before we go.
[PAUSE IN SILENCE]*

*With our feet firmly grounded here at our church home, we are grateful.
Here we find community and comfort.
Here we also encounter the call to go out, explore and become more..*

*On our journey today, let us take our practices and values with us
so we can notice and receive all the gifts offered to us.
May we remember to...*

*Be fully present
Be curious
Be open to being changed
Be comfortable with discomfort
Be an appreciative listener
Be light-hearted
Be gentle when mistakes are made
And, be ourselves*

*With all these commitments tucked tightly in our hearts and heads,
Amen, Let's go!*

The Visit

Have a great time!

Don't forget about collecting pictures for our future scrapbook/memory wall/video project. At the very least get a picture of the youth in front of the house of worship.
Have the youth text or email you 1-2 of their favorite pictures that they took. Save for the spring scrapbook/memory wall/video project.

After the Visit (just before everyone heads home)

Looking Ahead - What to do ahead of time or expect (1 min.)

Thank the youth for their participation. Praise something about how the youth handled themselves. Note one thing that you particularly appreciated or enjoyed about the visit.

Remind the youth that next week is Lake Sunday. Lift up anything they need to do or think about ahead of time.

Closing Words

"In the days ahead, **May the ropes be with you.** May we stay close to our deepest and truest selves. May we keep connected to each other. And may we remember to lean into life's joy. Blessed be. Amen"

Week 4

Lake Sunday

(Reflecting on Our Visit)

Purpose

- Reflect on the visit.
- Review our use of the Eight Practices of Welcoming

Preparation & Leader Notes

Dinner and Drive Time Tips (Email to parents prior to the meeting):

Before:

- *Talk with your youth about what they plan to write on the Thank You Card that will be sent to faith community they visited last week. This will help them prepare, give them a chance to reflect more on the visit and better enable them to write something meaningful on the card.*

After:

- *Ask your youth to share which of the 8 Practices of Welcoming were hardest for them personally.*
- *Ask them to share something about the graffiti board. They have been adding new thoughts to it each week. Ask them how the board has changed? What's interesting about how it has changed and grown? How does it show that the group's understanding of The Religious Society of Friends/Quaker has evolved?*

For You:

- *Talk with your spouse/partner or a friend about how your own view of the Quakers has evolved over the month as a result of your conversations with your youth.*

Pre-Session To Do List:

- Get a thank-you card for everyone to sign.
- (Optional) Invite a guest with a Quaker background or experience, perhaps identified in the Parent Orientation, or from a request to the congregation at large. Share Handout #2 with them and let them know the youth will be asking them the questions listed, optional.

Session

Entering - Graffiti Board Writing

Using the same graffiti board from past weeks, invite those entering to add words, pictures or impressions that represent what stuck out for them about last week's visit.

Gathering & Centering - Worship (10 min)

Centering Sound

Invite everyone to calm and center themselves. In honor of the Quaker commitment to silence, consider not using a chime or bell this week. Simply invite the youth to center themselves in silence and end the silence with "Amen."

Lighting the Chalice

"We light this chalice in gratitude for the path we share, a path that guides us back to our deepest self, back to each other, and back to life's gifts and joy."

Welcome

Suggested welcome script: "Welcome everyone to Lake Sunday! Lake Sunday is about "coming back from our journey - back down the mountain - and reflecting on our trip" I'm so excited for us to talk about our visit and notice all the gifts the visit gave us.

Music for Centering

Suggested script: "As a way of getting ready for this discussion about our learnings from our trip, our centering song this morning is a joyous and unconventional "Quaker rap" song. Not only does it capture the rapper's excitement about and gratitude for his faith, but it also helps us expand what we think of when we imagine "a typical Quaker." In other words, the song both makes you feel grateful and opens one's mind about Quakerism. Hopefully our visit did the same for us. Sink into the upbeat energy of the song and let it get you ready to share what you are thankful for about our trip. While we are thinking of thank you's, I'm going to pass around this Thank You Card during the video, take a moment to write some words of thank-you to the Quaker Meeting.

Dance Party Erupts During Quaker Meeting for Worship

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XIMkK4_kTg

*Lyrics are listed below the video

Closing Words

*"In the rest of our time together and in the days ahead, **May the ropes be with us.** May we stay close to our inner and truest selves. May we keep connected to each other. May we remember to lean into life's joy. - Blessed be. Amen"*

Extinguish the Chalice

Leader note: If you have an open flame, we suggest extinguishing it at this point to prevent accidents and pyro-play. Otherwise, consider extinguishing it during the Closing at the end of the session.

Reflecting on the Visit (30 min)

Questions to guide the discussion:

Initial Reactions

- 1. What surprised you?** What was completely new? What didn't you expect?
- 2. What was the most interesting part?** What was "cool"? When were you having the most fun?
- 3. What didn't you fully understand?** What confused you? What do you want to learn more about (Leader note: Answer the questions/confusions if you can. Or see if the group can help. If time, look up the answer on a computer/phone. If no time for that, encourage the youth to look it up with their parents or promise to look it up for them)

Personal Application

How did the trip and our past few weeks of learning make you think about your own life differently?

Lead the group in discussion about their personal takeaways. Invite them to think about how the visit *and all the learning* of the past weeks gave them a challenge for their own life. Here are some possible questions to help them with their reflection:

- Has the last few weeks made you think about your own "inner light" differently?
- Did our time make you want to work on relating to your "inner voice" more intentionally?
- Is silence something you think you might use to connect with your inner voice better?
- How is the Quaker idea of "the inner light" similar to and different from our UU idea of "the inherent worth and dignity of each person"? Has the Quaker understanding of "the inner light" changes how you think about "the inherent worth and dignity of each person"?
- What do you think of the idea of consensus and group decision making? Do you wish single leaders had less authority in the groups you are in?
- How might your own leadership style change because of what you learned about the Quaker view of leadership and collective wisdom?

Leader Note: Consider sharing your own personal takeaways first to model and help them think about this. How did the visit and learning invite you to think differently or want to make a change or add something more to your life?

Engaging the Graffiti Board - Stepping back and seeing how far we've come! (10 min)

- Gather around the graffiti board or take it down and bring it into the circle.
- Pause to see if there are any last things to add.
- Invite reactions and discussion
 - **What strikes you as you look at all the colors?** Were there some weeks where we seemed to learn more than others? Are there more words than pictures? What does that mean?
 - **Is there anything on the board that needs to be corrected?** Any “understanding” that was incomplete or misunderstood?
 - **What 2-3 things seem to best describe the essence of the Quakers for you?** If you had to explain the Quakers to someone else, which 2-3 items on the board would you talk about?
- Take some selfies! Individual and as a group. Remember to remind the youth that we will be using these pictures in the spring to create a scrapbook, memory wall or video to document our journey this year.

Eight Practices Review (10 min)

Remind the youth that Crossing Paths is not just about visiting and learning about other religions. It's also about learning skills and practices to better engage new people and new ideas throughout our entire life. So explain that you are reviewing how well the group used the 8 Practices not just to “grade ourselves” but also to push ourselves to develop them as “life practices.” The 8 Practices are included below, in Handout #1.

There are a number of ways to review the practices:

1. **As a group:** Have the group evaluate itself as a whole by going through the list one by one and asking the group to share when they did each practice well and when they could have done it a bit better.
2. **As individuals:** Ask each person to pick one practice they feel they did well and one practice they wish they had done better and want to work on. Take turns having each youth share their answers.

Playful Option 1: Taste Chocolate (10 min)

Cadbury's Chocolate - Quaker Founded

Explain

One of the businesses started by Quakers is Cadbury's. While it is no longer affiliated with the original Quaker family, the original philosophy of business followed Quaker philosophy.

1. The Cadbury family wanted to provide alternatives to liquor. Tea, coffee, and cocoa were seen as healthy, delicious alternatives to alcohol which Quakers deemed bad for society

2. BOURNVILLE 'THE FACTORY IN A GARDEN' IS BORN

“Birmingham architect, George H. Gadd worked closely with George Cadbury to draw up plans for the factory. The first bricks were laid in January 1879 and 16 houses for foremen and senior employees were built on the site.

These mostly semi-detached houses were well-built and spaced out with ample gardens. Production began at the Cadbury Brothers' 'Bournville factory in a garden' in September 1879. When the workers arrived they found facilities that were simply unknown in Victorian times. There was a field next to the factory where men were encouraged to play cricket and football; a garden and playground for the girls; a kitchen where workers could heat up their meals, and properly heated dressing rooms where they could get changed. As George said, 'If the country is a good place to live in, why not to work in?' Keen sportsmen, Richard and George encouraged sports

and recreations, often playing cricket themselves. Sports facilities grew to include football, hockey and cricket pitches, tennis and squash racquet courts and a bowling green. Gradually women's and men's swimming pools were built and every young boy and girl joining the company was encouraged to become a good swimmer. Work outings to the country were organized together with summer camps for the young boys. Morning prayers and daily bible readings, first started in 1866, helped preserve the family atmosphere and continued for another 50 years, until the workforce grew too large for such an assembly. For workers who still needed to travel to the new factory from their homes in Birmingham, the Cadbury brothers negotiated special workmen's train fares to Bournville's Stirchley Station with the local railway company. Cadbury duly became famous not just for its prosperity, but also for the advances in conditions and social benefits for its workforce."

<https://www.cadbury.co.uk/about-bournville>

While eating [Cadbury's chocolates](#), describe the philosophy of the Quaker Cadbury family, using the background above.

Playful Option 2: Taste Oatmeal (10 min)

Make oatmeal from a Quaker Oats box. Serve with toppings such as brown sugar, nuts, raisins. Add milk, milk substitute, butter, optional.

While it is cooking, point out the Quaker Oats guy, playfully named "Larry" by the Quaker Oats marketers. But Quaker Oats was never affiliated with the Quaker religion.

"The name "Quaker Oats" was chosen by the company owners because Quakers at the time symbolized good quality and honest value," which was what the owners wanted to convey about their oats. However, the Quaker Oats man DOES look like [portraits of William Penn](#), the Quaker who founded Pennsylvania."

<https://triviahappy.com/articles/the-pure-and-honest-quaker-oats-guy-a-biography>

Review the "testimony of plainness" in Quaker philosophy, pointing out that Quakers do not dress differently in modern times. In colonial times, they chose to wear dress similar to the Amish. These clothes were dark colors lacking adornments, such as pockets, buttons, buckles, lace and embroidery.

Looking Ahead - What to do ahead of time or expect

Thank the youth for their participation this week. Note one thing that you particularly appreciated or enjoyed about the session you just did with them.

Remind the youth what is happening next week and make sure they know what they have to do ahead of time. Note one thing that you are particularly looking forward to.

Closing Words

“In the days ahead, May the ropes be with you. May we stay close to our deepest and truest selves. May we keep connected to each other. And may we remember to lean into life’s joy. Blessed be. Amen”

Extinguish the chalice if you haven’t done so earlier. Invite any participants to sign the thank-you card if they haven’t done so.

Add-Ons for Groups with More Time

Option #1 - Interview

If you have time, consider inviting a congregant with a background in Quakerism to visit and talk with the youth. You can do this after or before you reflect on your visit - both have advantages and disadvantages. Use Handout #2 “Interview Questions.”

Option #2 - Attend an Adult Service on Trust

“Visiting” your own worship service can enrich the experience tremendously. If you usually meet during the service, consider changing and expanding your schedule for Lake Sunday, attending the service first then staying after to do the Lake Sunday session. You can go even deeper with this by asking your minister or ministers to come talk with the youth after the service about what they appreciate about the Quakers and how they see UUs and Quakers being similar and different when it comes to belief and their understanding of what it means to be a people of Trust.

Handout #1
The Eight Practices of Welcoming Difference

1. Be fully present
2. Be curious
3. Be open to being changed
4. Be comfortable with discomfort
5. Be an appreciative listener
6. Be light-hearted
7. Be gentle (allow and heal mistakes)
8. Be yourself

Handout #2

Interview Questions

1. Were you raised Quaker, or did you become one later in life? If you were raised a Quaker, what in particular has kept you so involved? If you became a Quaker later, what in particular drew you to it?
2. What initiation ritual did you go through when you became a Quaker? How does one begin their journey in the faith? What was your initiation ritual like for you? Were you scared? Excited? Both?
3. Did you attend a Quaker high school or college? How were they different from other schools you attended?
4. What is your favorite Quaker quote?
5. What is your favorite historical Quaker story?
6. How do you describe and think of “the inner light”? Is it connected to more traditional understandings of God and Jesus? Or it is something quite distinct from traditional Christian concepts?
7. How do you think about the relationship between Quakerism and Christianity?
8. Can you share a time when you were moved to share in Quaker meeting? How did you know your inner light was calling you to speak? Did you ever speak when you were a teenager?
9. How does the Quaker testimony of simplicity manifest in your life?
10. Have your Quaker practices of stillness, silence and deep listening impacted the way you go about your job? Has it influenced others at your work? How about your family relationships? How does the practice of deep listening and the belief in an inner light shape that?
11. How do you feel about the process of “finding the sense of the meeting”? Do you ever find Quaker consensus decision-making frustrating? Do you have a good story about a time it surprised you in a good way?
12. What are the major misconceptions out there about Quakers? What do you wish others better understood?
13. Is there a particular Quaker belief or perspective that you think is especially relevant to our culture and political climate right now?

Some Resources to Remember:

Soulful Home Family Guides

Invite your parents to explore the themes at home with their entire family by subscribing to our monthly parent guides, **Soulful Home**.

Here's the link to the Soulful Home page on our website:

<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/soulful-home.html>.

Here's [a link](#) to a PDF flyer you can share with families.

Inspiration Facebook Page

To keep you inspired as a group leader, check out our Soul Matters Facebook inspiration page:

<https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

Consider also sharing it with your youth and their families!

Soul Matters Spotify Music Playlists

Discover musical inspiration on each of our monthly themes through our playlists:

<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/spotify-lists.html>

A great source of inspiration and connection for you, the youth and their families!

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