



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

January 2017

Issue 107



An easy-to-use plan for a Children's Meeting

Make sure you have a little time of worship for yourself and other volunteers before the session – even a few minutes is good. The outline is based on a 45 minute children's meeting.

Gather

Welcome everyone and make sure that everyone knows each other's names. It is helpful to begin with a time of stillness; you might want to use a lit candle as a way of focusing as you share any news from the past week(s) that children or other adults might want to share.

Begin by talking about the way Quakers think about and reflect on their experiences – as the children have just done – as a way of helping them to think about God or the divine, and those things that are most precious, real and important to us. Perhaps ask: What in your week has made you happiest or feel sad? What has made you feel joyful? Who were you with who helped you feel happy? Remind the children how helpful the silence can be in enabling them to feel peaceful and to see things clearly.

10 minutes

Engage

Talk about *Qf&p Chapter 26*, 'Reflections' and how it is full of stories and insights that share a sense of being nourished, prompted, held and inspired by something greater than ourselves. For the writers there are little glimpses of God; not the whole thing, but a fragment, a flicker of light or a feeling of love surrounding them. For them it is like seeing a fragment of a picture that helps you to imagine what the rest might look like.

Give to each of the children a fragment of one of the pictures you have brought. Without showing the whole picture ask each to imagine what the whole thing might look like. Then you can ask the children to find the rest of the pieces of their picture. Who has them? How do they fit together?

Reflect with the children that when we see just one piece of a picture, it can be hard to know what the rest of it is, what building it might be or whose face. But when we share those fragments, when we talk about them to each other, we begin to build up a bigger picture.

It can be the same when we talk to each other about God, about those things that are precious and important to us; we understand each other better and we begin to see the bigger picture.

10 minutes

Respond

Talk to the children about how important and helpful Quakers have found it to use a journal as a way of thinking about, and reflecting on their life and experience. Invite the children to decorate the exercise books you have provided for them to use as journals for the children to reflect on their day.

20 minutes

Reflect

It is helpful to have some time at the end of the session to reflect and share together as a group and maybe ask these questions: What are the places that help you feel closest to God; most peaceful and safe and happy? When sad or difficult things happen, what could you do to remember that you are precious and loved? What kinds of things might you write about if you keep a journal?

