



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

March 2017

Issue 108



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 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.

Explain that today you are going to look at chapter 25 of *Quaker faith & practice*, which contains passages written by Quakers which have been chosen and included in the book to help us to think about the world that we live in and our care of the Earth. John Woolman saw the Earth as a gift from God, who created or made the universe. He saw a connection between what we own, our care of the environment and justice, both for those living now and for generations to come. He also felt that we have a responsibility to care for the Earth and think about what it will be like in the future if we don't. Would you agree with John Woolman? What might the Earth be like in the future if we don't care for it?

10 minutes

Engage

Tell the children the about Audry Urry (see *Additional Resource 108.B*) and how she came to join the Quakers and eventually get involved in Quaker Green concern.

Quakers have always believed that what we do, our practice, should follow from our faith, that caring about the Earth means we should treat all of it with respect, with kindness. So they try to live this way, choosing to eat food that has not harmed animals or damaged the soil, buying items that have been fairly traded. They try to save and not waste energy, putting solar panels on their roofs, recycling and making compost. More and more people, not only Quakers, are now seeing that if we hurt the planet we live on we shall soon be hurting ourselves. Wonder with the children about this. Do their families already do things like this? Can they think of any other ways to help take care of our home, the Earth?

10 minutes

Respond

In Indian religion, the Mandala represents the universe. We can design our own Mandalas to represent our personal or communal world, as it is for us at the moment of drawing or making it. Collect some leaves, sticks, stones and other natural objects. Remind everyone to take care to avoid damaging plants or harming any creatures that they come across. Take turns arranging these on a large sheet of paper or cloth, listening to each other and giving gentle suggestions. Afterwards, return the natural objects outdoors where you found them (taking a photo first might facilitate this letting go).



20 minutes

Reflect

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

Questions to think about:-

- Is it important to have a chapter about the Unity of Creation in Quaker faith & practice?
- What could the adults in the meeting learn from hearing about chapter 25 of *Quaker faith & practice*?
- Would you like to share a passage 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.

5 minutes