



# Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

May 2018

Issue 115

A simple plan for an all-age Meeting for Worship



## Welcoming the stranger – refugees and forced migration

*Materials: paper/card, coloured pens or pencils.*

Begin by welcoming everyone to all age worship. Start with a few moments of quiet.

Tell those gathered that we are going to do a guided meditation based on a 2,500 year-old Buddhist practice.

Buddhists believe that, if you want to be a kind and compassionate person, it helps to practice, as you might practice a sport or musical instrument. This meditation is called the Metta Bhavana, or 'cultivation of loving kindness'. It's about developing a state of mind where you see the humanity in everyone – in Quaker terms it is similar, I think, to seeing that of God in everyone.

First, sit comfortably and close your eyes. You might want to place your feet slightly apart and your hands loosely in your lap. (2 minutes)

In order to care for others we must first care for ourselves. Think about yourself, and what you like about yourself. This can be quite hard, as we are often critical of ourselves, but be kind! (2 minutes)

Next, think of a good friend, and all the things you like about them. (2 minutes)

Now think of someone you don't know well, and don't have any particular feelings about. Think about their lives. Like you, they have things they enjoy and things they dislike; happiness and sadness colour their lives too. (2 minutes)

Now it begins to get more difficult. Think of someone you really don't like very much. And think of them in the same way as you have been thinking of the others. They too have thoughts, feelings, likes and dislikes, troubles and joys. (2 minutes)

Finally, think outwards into the world: think of all the millions of people you have never met and never will meet, who are living in the same world as us and who share our experience of being human. (2 minutes)

When you are ready, and if you wish, try and imagine someone around the same age as yourself whose home has been destroyed in a war and who has come here to find somewhere safe to live. Imagine they have moved in just down your road. (2 minutes)

Here are two suggestions to follow on from the meditation relating to the final prompt.

- Make a 'welcome' card to put through their door. What might you say, or draw?
- Thinking ahead, a year after their arrival, you have got to know one another and become good friends. Think about what this friendship has brought to both your lives. You could write a poem or letter or draw a picture about your friendship.

Alternatively people to continue in quiet worship.