



# Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

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Issue 116



## A simple plan for an all-age Meeting for Worship

**Before planning this Meeting for Worship:** Dementia may be a difficult topic for some or all of the Meeting. Perhaps this is not the right topic for your Meeting now – or perhaps this All Age Meeting for Worship could open the way to conversations?

Those who lead the Meeting should make sure there is a small group, who can support each other. Spend some time together in worship as you plan.

Those who support the Meeting should make sure those who have responsibilities for eldership or oversight know what is to be considered and are ready to support anyone who needs it.

**Preparation:** *In the weeks before the All Age Meeting for Worship tell Friends the topic. Ask them to find an object that brings back memories and to bring it to the Meeting - nothing valuable or delicate! Set up a table in the Meeting room for objects that Friends bring and supply others yourself; you need each person to be able to choose from several objects. These could be anything – photos, flowers, shells, a cup cake, a toy, an old fashioned kitchen utensil, some knitting, jewellery, books, pieces of fabric, old magazines, tools, a teddy...*

*You will need a large box – perhaps wrapped in coloured paper as a Memory Box.*

*Some Friends find it helpful to have a written notice outside the Meeting room, welcoming everyone, detailing the topic and outlining the programme*

### During the Meeting

Make sure all activities are framed by worshipful silence.

*If there are children who will find it hard not to be busy you could have a small table for drawing pictures of people and things we love and children could come and go from this. Be aware that this could be distracting – so only have if needed.*

Begin with a period of silence.

You could read from *Advices & Queries* 18 or 29.

**Introduction:** The topic of this All Age Meeting for Worship is dementia. We will be thinking about memories, how and what we remember and what remains important. Maybe we'll begin to think about how we worship and if that changes if we have dementia.

Explain that there will be periods of silence through the Meeting. There may be spoken ministry at any time.

**Story:** Tell Richard's story (see the *Additional Resource 116.A* there is a link to this in the sidebar of the main *Journey in the Spirit 116* issue). Shorten or adapt as needed.



## Silence

**Activity:** Invite everyone to go to the table and look at and handle all the different objects. Any drawings of people or things we love should be placed on the table at this time.

Do the objects bring back memories? Happy? Sad? Spiritual? Fun?



Invite everyone to take one object back to their seat and to hold it for a moment, open to the feelings it brings back for them.

Ask people to think of Richard, or of someone they know who has dementia. Might this object be helpful to remind Richard of his life?

Invite people to place the object in the Memory Box.

Together the Meeting can hold on to some memories for people who can't remember without some help.

## Silence

**Sing:** Little Bo Peep is a nursey rhyme that most Friends will remember from their childhood – but it's also about someone who forgot something really important – but in fact it will work out well – the sheep will return.

## Silence

**Read:** *Quaker Faith & practice* 21.62.

Explain that William Penn was an early Quaker; he achieved a lot of things and was a man of great principle who knew a lot. This passage describes how he had dementia when he was old – but he still worshipped and could still sit with other Quakers

## Silence