

Journeys in the Spirit

An introduction and user guide



Journeys in the Spirit aims to:

- Provide resources for children & young people's work.
- Help volunteers with their children & young people's work and their own spiritual journeys.
- Encourage children and young people's faith practice, spiritual development and social abilities.
- Develop children and young people's understanding of Quakerism past, present and future.
- Develop community in Quaker meetings and their localities.
- Provide opportunities for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

The **children's edition** offers a variety of activities on a theme suitable for children's meeting (ages 4 – 12). This comes out monthly (on the first of each month). The **youth edition** provides enough material for a weekend with young people (ages 12 – 18) and is flexible enough to be used over a series of shorter sessions. This edition comes out three times a year (February, June and October).



Resources and ideas for Quakers engaging with children and young people

Journeys in the Spirit includes:

- **Getting ready** – encouraging the people responsible for planning the session to think in relation to the theme.
- **Gather** – framing the session in the context of worship; bringing the group together; setting the tone; being ready for what is to follow.
- **Engage** – thinking about the theme; breaking open the topic; encouraging listening; creating interest, wonder and enquiry; posing questions without offering answers; exploring together.
- **Respond** – encouraging a response to the theme through a variety of approaches; considering the children and young people's ministry in relation to the theme; identifying the need for both individual and corporate action.
- **Reflect** – readying people to go back out into the world; looking back and looking forward; thinking about what will be taking away from the session; recognising the journey that has been travelled and the journey that is to come; leaving people wondering.
- **Review** – some questions or queries to assist those who facilitated the sessions to review and make judgements about what took place.
- **Topical activity** – ideas for exploring and considering an issue that is of the moment (children's edition only).
- **Links** – suggestions of other resources or organisations relevant to the theme.
- **Additional sheets** – contain extra information and activities which are linked from the main text.

This sheet gives an introduction to Journeys in the Spirit. It outlines the structure and format and gives ideas on how to use Journeys in a range of settings.

Underpinning each issue of Journeys in the Spirit are two core principles.

The first is that there are four directions to our spiritual journey: *Inwards* to ourselves; *Outwards* to others; *Upwards* towards the Light, God, the deeper mystery; *Downwards* to the world we live in. Journeys in the Spirit offers ways for each of these to be explored in a Quaker context.

The second is to give children and young people the opportunity to develop their own experience, understanding and practice of Quakerism.

Using Journeys in the Spirit

Place: Journeys in the Spirit might be used at children's meeting for worship, at midweek activity clubs, on residential events or at all-age gatherings.

Planning: While Journeys in the Spirit provides a process for approaching a theme in a variety of ways, it still requires planning and preparation by those using it. To get the best out of the material presented, take the time to consider the theme and to think about how the ideas offered would work in your context (for example the size of the groups, the age of participants, length of the session). The most effective sessions will be balanced and include something from each of the Gather, Engage, Respond and Reflect sections. Whilst it is possible to use an activity from Journeys in the Spirit without preparation, this is not recommended.

Preferences: Each issue of Journeys in the Spirit offers more than can be used in one session. This recognises that different contexts have different needs and we all have different preferences. The intention is to provide enough material to be the basis for a number of sessions on the same theme.

Possibilities: What is offered is not a curriculum to be followed but ideas to enable effective engagement and to be a springboard for other approaches, ideas and activities. Journeys in the Spirit is not just a set of activities but is worship and should be planned and used with this in mind. Work with children and young people should not be presented as a closed package but rather should seek to open up fresh thinking and feeling for all involved. Feel free to adapt the material to fit the gifts and talents within your own meeting and alter it to fit your situation. While good planning is beneficial this must be done acknowledging that no one knows where the session will end up.

Some Friends' comments:

"We have been using some of the ideas (in Journeys) to link into our existing programme for the Children and Young Friends. We are planning to use the most recent link on post Yugoslav conflict resolution as part of a wider conflict resolution project in our Meeting, leading onto an All Age session in Jan / Feb when we use the Israel / Palestine material (number 17). I think the material provided is so relevant and well planned and really appreciate this support from your team."

"Last Sunday I helped with my first young people's meeting following a day long training workshop which gave us the confidence to do this. 'Journeys in the Spirit' has been an outstanding inspirational and material resource without which we would have found it very difficult to make progress".

A Journeys in the Spirit index is being worked on – this will be available through the website.

Subscribing

Journeys in the Spirit is published by Children & Young People's Staff Team of Quaker Life and is available free by subscription either by email or on paper.

To subscribe contact Bevelie Shember, CYP Staff Team, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. Phone 020 7663 1013 Email bevelies@quaker.org.uk & tell us your name, address, phone number, email and local and area meeting. Please specify whether you would like the Children's or Youth edition or both and whether you want to receive an email or need a paper version.

Back issues are archived and available on the BYM website at www.quaker.org.uk/cyp then select Resources from the left hand menu.

If you have any queries about Journeys in the Spirit, have an idea for a future theme or would like to be a Journeys writer please contact Chris Nickolay (children's edition) 020 7663 1014 chrisn@quaker.org.uk or Howard Nurden (youth edition) 020 7663 1012 howardn@quaker.org.uk