



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

September 2019

Issue 123



An easy to use plan for a children's meeting

Have a little time of worship for yourself and other volunteers before the session – even a couple of minutes are good. This outline is based on a 45 minutes children's meeting for worship

Gather:

Welcome each child by silently giving them a card heart (see *Additional resources 123A. link in sidebar of main issue*). When everyone is ready ask them what you are communicating to them by giving them a heart. Explain you are all going to think about how we communicate in different ways.

Use a beautiful stone or shell to pass round the group. If this way of communicating is new to the group explain that this works well if they listen until it is their turn to hold the object and speak.

Invite each person to talk about how their week has been, how they are feeling today, or something they would like to tell the group. Do whatever is appropriate for your children. Some may struggle to listen without commenting. Quietly encourage listening and recognise this can be difficult to do.

10 minutes

Engage:

Look together at the painting 'None Shall Make Them Afraid' by J. Doyle Penrose (*Additional Sheet 123.B see link in sidebar of main issue*). Think with the children about what the painting is communicating.

Explain that the Quakers in Meeting communicated by continuing to sit worshipping in silence when the Native Americans came in with weapons. This way of communicating gave a peaceful message. Rather than attack the Quakers, the Native Americans put down their weapons and sat down with the Quakers.

Finally, when the meeting was over one of the Native Americans spoke in French explaining that they had wanted to kill everyone there, but they found people with no weapons worshipping the Great Spirit. The Great Spirit told them not to kill the people. He slowly took a white feather and fastened it above the door of the Meeting House. This communicated that the Quakers would be safe and be friends with the Native Americans

10 minutes

Respond:

Ask everyone to sit in pairs with a large piece of thick paper, A2 or bigger, between them. Each person chooses three different mark making tools from a selection of coloured pencils, pens, chalks, pastels, paint.

- When everyone is ready ask them to take it in turns to make a mark on the paper in silence. It is helpful to explain that this is a way of communicating that does not use words or body movements, other than making a mark.
- Everyone should begin at the same time and continue until asked to stop. Around 10 minutes is often about right.
- Put the sheets of communication up on the wall and ask each pair to say how it felt communicating in this way. Encourage responses from others too.

Chose another of the communications experiences on page three of the main issue. Afterwards discuss how the activities felt.

20 minutes

Reflect:

Ask everyone to wonder about how people are communicating in Meeting for Worship.

Give space for children to ask wondering questions and ideas about anything that came up. These questions might be shared with others in the adult meeting for worship.

If you go in to join the adults at the end suggest the children wonder about how people are communicating during this time.

Or sit together in silence for 2 to 3 minutes and wonder how you might be communicating.

5 minutes

