

# Your first time in a Quaker meeting



## Arriving at meeting

Our experiences of meeting for worship are individual. We may find it very different each time we come.

At a meeting house you will probably be greeted at the door.

Worship usually begins when the first person enters the room. You can sit wherever feels comfortable. You'll notice that others usually enter in silence.



Pictures: Mike Pinches for Quakers in Britain

The meeting usually ends when two people share a handshake.

After worship there may be news and announcements, and conversation over tea and coffee.

You are warmly invited to stay, but there's no pressure – only do what feels comfortable.

# Settling into the stillness

Coming to Quaker worship for the first time can be a challenge.

We may not have much stillness or silence in our lives. There's no right or wrong way to settle into this style of worship – here are some ideas:

- get comfortable, adjust your position
- notice your breathing
- close your eyes or focus on something in the room
- read a short passage from one of the books available.

People describe their spiritual experience in many different ways. Quakers may use the words God, Light or Spirit.

At a Quaker meeting we open our hearts and minds to each other and to God.

There are no set prayers, readings or songs. This makes space for us to listen and respond to the Light.

In the stillness, we may find new insights and guidance. Sometimes we are moved to share what we discover with those present: anyone can do this.

## Worship and ministry

Sometimes a meeting may be completely silent.

If someone feels moved to speak, they stand up – if they are able to – and speak clearly and briefly to the whole group. We call this ministry.

We listen to the ministry in silence and leave space to reflect on what has been said.



We try to notice our own response to the ministry, and find its meaning for us, even if the words are unfamiliar.

These different expressions of our faith help us understand that spirituality is not limited to one set of words or beliefs.

# All are welcome

Quakers welcome children and families. We believe that everyone can connect with the Spirit. The spirituality of all people, including children and young people, is equal.

There may be a dedicated children's meeting. Sometimes children join the adults in worship or the meeting may have all-age events for everyone to worship together.



Worship may have other forms, which may be online, all-age or out of doors. These are equally valid and important to Quakers.

Every Quaker meeting is different – if one doesn't feel like the right fit for you, another might.

# Quakers in Britain

Your local meeting may have a mailing list which you can join to receive information about events and ways to get involved.

You can find out more about the Quaker way through Woodbrooke – the Quaker learning organisation – or the Quakers in Britain website.

To find out about opportunities for newcomers to learn more online, email [supportmeetings@quaker.org.uk](mailto:supportmeetings@quaker.org.uk).



When and where your local meeting is held...

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## Quakers in Britain

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