



Membership and belonging

Yearly Meeting 18 July 2026

At the next Yearly Meeting session on 18 July 2026 Quakers will be exploring new ways to become a member. They will be thinking about the people who mainly attend online worship or who are connected to another Quaker community that isn't based in a particular place. They will consider whether to create a new kind of way for those people to become members, without needing to be connected to a traditional local or area meeting.

The children and young people who are attending YM in July will have a different agenda. However, children and young people in your meeting might still like to think about membership and belonging.

This sheet offers some ways that adults facilitating meetings for children and young people might support younger Quakers to explore these issues. (Adults might enjoy some of these activities too.)

Some ideas to explore this topic

Depending on the age of the children or young people you are working with, you might be able to try one or more of these ideas.

Story & response (for children)

The October 2014 issue of *Journeys in the Spirit* (a newsletter for Quakers working with children and young people) is about "Looking after each other & making links". It shares the story of Margaret Fell in an accessible way and offers some suggestions to help children think about how we accept and look after each other, creating a sense of belonging. There is enough material in this resource to fill a whole children's meeting session if you want to.

Access the resource on the [Woodbrooke website \(PDF\)](#)

Discussion (can be adapted to different ages)

This exercise is contained within the resource above, but it can easily be used on its own if you only have a short time, or want to cover different topics in your meeting.

Read out the following, simplifying or explaining the words if you need to:

How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome? Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another. As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other's lives, ready to give help and to receive it, our meeting can be a channel for God's love and forgiveness.

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- Ask the group what they think it means
- Share what you think it means
- Ask how the group accepts one another

Craft & discussion (could be for any age)

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Craft: Where am I?

For each person who will be coming, create a set of circles that increase in size.



Begin with the smallest circle and ask the children to draw themselves in their home. Move on to the next circle and have them draw their town, then country, then continent, until they draw the planet on the largest circle. (You could use different labels if you like.)

When the drawings are done, punch a hole at the top of each one and connect them with some string or a ring.

This easy craft will help children understand how they fit into larger communities.

Discussion: Wondering questions...

Using the "Where am I" circles, ask the following questions:

- Where do you feel the most welcomed and included?
- What is it about those places that makes you feel this way?
- I wonder where you feel peaceful and at home?

If you want to explore the shared Quaker values that enable us to worship and live in a peaceful and positive way you can use *Let's explore the Quaker way*: [lets-explore-the-quaker-way-2017](#)

This activity comes from the June 2023 edition of *Journeys in the Spirit* (a newsletter for Quakers working with children and young people), which is about "Belonging". Download the newsletter from the [Woodbrooke website to find more activities to help explore belonging \(PDF\)](#).

Group activity: Being a Quaker (for younger teenagers)

Draw a large 'Q' on a piece of flipchart paper and place it in the centre of the group. Explain that this 'Q' stands for Quakerism, and being a Quaker.

Hand out sticky notes and pens, ask people to write on the sticky notes what they associate with Quakerism and being a Quaker – serious and not so serious.

Ask everyone to stick their notes around the 'Q', the closest ones being the things that they more closely associate with being a Quaker, getting further away as they become less closely linked.

Give everyone time to read all the notes.

Prompt a discussion by asking:

- Why they wrote a particular thing?
- Where did they place it and why?
- If other people agree – or do they think it should be closer or further away?
- If they had to leave just one sticky note which would it be? What, for them, is the one thing they most closely associate with being a Quaker?

Creative listening: What does being a Quaker mean to you? (for older teenagers)

Use a token that someone has to be holding to talk – this helps to ensure that only one person speaks at a time. Remind people that if they don't want to answer a particular question then they can pass. Try to make sure everyone gets a chance to speak.

Ask the following:

- What does being a Quaker mean to you?
- I like being a Quaker when... (what, for you, are the positive things about being a Quaker?)
- I find it difficult being a Quaker when... (what for you are the challenges of being a Quaker?)
- I feel most Quaker when....