

Quakers and Prayer

For many Quakers, prayer is part of our individual lives as well as part of Meeting for Worship.

Prayer

Prayer is simply conversation or contact with God where we open ourselves to the Divine presence. This can take different forms. Quakers may pray silently. We may formulate words or an image or just be. It is important that we listen for what God may have to say to us.

Some Quakers also use set prayers from the Bible or other spiritual writings when they pray.

Quaker Grace

Before meals, Quakers typically have a silent grace or a moment of silent thankfulness for the meal and for each other. The group often holds hands during grace.

Holding in the Light

During or after worship, a Friend may ask the group to “hold someone in the Light.” The person may be sick, dealing with difficult life circumstances, struggling spiritually, or working to serve others.

To hold a person in the Light, imagine them being held in God’s loving presence and offer prayers and love for them. Holding an individual or a group of people in the Light is often part of our practice of prayer.

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Quakers and Prayer (continued)

For me, prayer is more about listening than talking.
Prayer is a way of being with God.

— *Deborah Fisch, 2010*

To pray is to change. Prayer is the central avenue
God uses to transform us.

— *Richard Foster*

*in Celebration of Discipline: The Path to
Spiritual Growth, HarperSanFrancisco, 1978*

When I read that I was supposed to make “a place
for inward retirement and waiting upon God” in
my daily life, . . . I thought: “Oh, those stuffy old
Friends, they don’t understand! Do they think I’m
going to be able to sit for an hour, or half an hour,
or a quarter of an hour, or for any time at all, in my
very busy life, just to have some kind of feeling of
‘inward retirement’?” I felt irritated and misunder-
stood, and I tried to put the whole thing out of my
mind.

At last I began to realize . . . that I needed some
kind of inner peace, or inward retirement, or
whatever name it might be called by. . . . I began to
realize that prayer was not a formality or an obliga-
tion; it was a place which was there all the time and
always available.

— *Elfrida Vipont Foulds*

*in The Candle of the Lord,
Pendle Hill Pamphlet #248, 1983*

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