

Opportunities to Learn About the Quaker Way and Grow in the Spirit

One of the most effective ways of keeping newcomers coming back is to get them involved in the life of the meeting. Below are things that some meetings have used to assimilate newcomers into the life of the meeting – and move them from visitors to full participants.

Classes for Newcomers

Seekers often comment that they hunger for education about the Quaker way. You can address that hunger by planning a series of programs to help new attenders explore Quaker beliefs and practices. You can use formal curricula (visit Quaker Books at FGC for suggestions), or adapt Pendle Hill pamphlets, *Friends Journal* articles or books to study, or FGC's "Quakerism 101" curriculum for classes for newcomers. Make certain that you present materials in ways that make the Quaker faith accessible and easy to understand for people who may have had no previous exposure to the Quaker way. Communicate the joy of Quakerism as well as its basic tenets. In those ways you'll help newcomers discover the Quaker way with ease.

Classes for the Whole Meeting

Invite newcomers to classes about the Quaker way, book studies, spiritual formation classes, or discussion groups offered to the entire meeting. Make sure you have a clear introduction of the topic to give to newcomers. Bring newcomers up to date on the issues or to inform them about aspects of the Quaker way which underlie the discussion.

Worship Sharing

Organize opportunities for members and attenders, including new attenders, to deepen their spiritual life through worship sharing. Such groups are especially good for providing opportunities to share spiritual journeys. Sharing like this helps members and attenders to get to know each other more deeply in the Spirit. Some meetings and worship groups offer worship sharing following a Meeting for Worship so that Friends may share what they inwardly experienced during the worship. Some meetings offer regular worship sharing on queries provided by their yearly meeting.

Witness

Look for ways that your meeting or worship group engage in and support the witness activities inspired by your Quaker faith. Such activities might include volunteering in a food pantry or soup kitchen; sponsoring prayer vigils, letter writing campaigns, or informational sessions about current peace and social justice issues, or attending community meetings focused on prison reform, peace work, or civil rights. Think of ways God may be leading your meetings

understanding of our testimonies to blossom into the larger world. Let newcomers know about these activities via announcements, newsletters and email. Personally invite newcomers to join you.

Meeting for Business

Meeting for business can be a wonderful opportunity to engage newcomers in the life of the meeting, particularly if it is a time of worshipful sharing and careful attention to matters at hand. Distribute minutes to everyone – including newcomers – so that all are aware of the meeting’s decisions. This is a good opportunity to explain Quaker process to newcomers.

Connect

Connect with FGC:

- FGC has resources to support new and existing groups
- FGC can help a group connect with other local Quaker groups
- FGC can help you get listed on QuakerFinder.org to help others find you

FGC staff and volunteers are happy to talk with you about this, or any other issue, your meeting or worship group is facing. Please contact us by emailing us at friends@fgcquaker.org or phoning 215-561-1700.

This document was downloaded from the website of Friends General Conference. Explore the many resources and opportunities we offer for Quakers, Quaker meetings, and all interested individuals. Go to www.fgcquaker.org.

