

Welcome to Bath Quaker Meeting

Whether you are here for the first time or are already familiar with the Quaker way of worship, you are very welcome at our meeting for worship today.

Everybody contributes in Quaker worship. This may be through prayerful listening, speaking, or simply by being present. There is no requirement to hold particular beliefs in order to take part.

Quaker worship is grounded in quiet stillness. In this silence we listen for love and truth in our hearts. Anyone present – adult or child, newcomer or regular participant – may feel prompted to speak (or sing). We call this spoken ministry. We also recognize that ministry can be an unspoken, silent contribution.

We hope the guidance in this leaflet will help you participate fully in meeting for worship. This is not a rigid set of rules, but rather a reminder of what Quakers have found helpful in practice.

Quakers share a way of life rather than a set of beliefs. We seek to experience God directly, within ourselves and in our relationships with others and the world around us. These direct encounters with the divine are where Quakers find meaning and purpose.

- ❖ Spontaneous contributions from babies and small children are always welcome.
- ❖ It is usually helpful to allow a generous period of silence (10 minutes or more) at the beginning of meeting for worship.
- ❖ Listen to all ministry in an open, charitable spirit. If the words used are disturbing, try to reach for the intention behind them. Even if what is offered is not meaningful to you, it may be so for someone else.
- ❖ Spoken ministry, inspired by Love, is very welcome. Try not to assume that you will never offer it. All of our lives are touched by God. Even a few hesitant words from this deep place can be of great service.
- ❖ Ministry arises from our worship together rather than from pre-prepared speeches or pre-selected readings.
- ❖ Sometimes an insight is for us personally and does not need to be shared with the group.
- ❖ Before speaking, we may want to ask ourselves: might others mistake this message for political campaigning? No topic is off-limits but the prompting to minister comes from something more than our own views, however passionately held.
- ❖ Leave silence after a previous spoken ministry so that it can be taken in.
- ❖ Ministry may build on previous ministry, but it is never a discussion or debate.
- ❖ Only speak once during a meeting.
- ❖ Try to speak audibly and distinctly so all can hear. If you can, stand up to speak.
- ❖ Allow another generous period of silence towards the end of the meeting. In this time we may feel gathered together and guided.