# **Meeting for Learning series:**

# **Building back better**

# **MEETING 2 PLAN**

# **How can Quaker faith guide us?**

*A note on how to use these meeting plans:*

This plan is written for session facilitator(s) rather than for the whole group.

Facilitators are the people hosting and running the meeting. They do not need any expertise on the content. They will also take part in all meeting activities where possible.

This plan is intended as a guide to help you run useful sessions. If parts of the plan are not relevant to your group, then feel free to discard or change them! Do whatever works best for your group.

## Agenda outline

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Activity** | **Time**  **(in minutes)** |
| Introduction | 1. Welcome and introduction | 10 |
| 1. Check-ins and reflections or worship sharing | 20 |
| Deeper exploration | 1. What does your faith ask of you? | 20 |
| 1. Which Quaker testimony/ies do you feel most drawn to? Why? | 10 |
| 1. How have Quakers been working to build a better social order (towards Heaven on earth)? | 20 |
| Closing | 1. Closing | 10 |

Total time: 90 minutes

If you run the series with people of other faiths, one of the preparatory materials and the exercises in meeting 2 will need to be adapted. You could replace the preparatory material ‘Building back better after times of crisis’ with an invitation to research how people of your faith have worked to build a better world and what principles of your faith underpin this work. The exercise ‘Which Quaker testimony/ies do you feel most drawn to? Why?’ can be adapted to substitute the relevant faith principles or beliefs for each individual. Meanwhile, the exercise ‘How have Quakers been working to build a better social order’ can be adapted to allow everyone to share stories of how people of their faith have been working to build a better social order.

**Timings**

We have suggested 90 minutes to be accessible to those who would like to run the group on Zoom. If you are meeting on Zoom, make sure to take a 5-10 minute break around halfway through the agenda.

If you are able to spend longer and would like to extend the meeting to e.g. 2 hours, we suggest adding 10 minutes to each of the activities ‘What does your faith ask of you?’, ‘Which Quaker testimonies do you feel most drawn to?’ and ‘How have Quakers been working to build a better social order (towards Heaven on earth)?’.

## Materials needed if meeting online

* Take a look at our [Technology crib sheet](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FfB6hcHiRaXm3T_G56v1N9vrZbc7-VtKvf6QfjiRKao/edit?usp=sharing) for links to helpful guidance on running meetings online on Zoom.

## Materials needed if meeting in person

* Tea, coffee / refreshments (if you decide you want them)
* Flip chart paper (or large sheets of paper)
* Flip chart (or felt tip) pens

## Session plan

1. **Welcome and introduction (10 minutes)**

*If meeting in person you may want to offer people tea and coffee as they arrive. Make sure everyone has a comfortable place to sit. Chairs should be arranged in a single circle.*

Welcome everyone, and thank all those involved in organising the Meeting for Learning series. If there is anyone new in the room (who wasn’t at the first meeting), suggest that everyone in the room goes round the circle and introduces themselves briefly (saying their name).

Once this is done, outline the agenda for today (see agenda outline above). Explain that the aim of the session is to have a chance to discuss how our faith can guide us.Mention that the plan for the meeting assumes that people will have completed the preparatory materials for this meeting before attending.

If there is anyone new in the room (who wasn’t at the first meeting), emphasise again that no prior knowledge is necessary and that you want everyone to feel welcome, even if they don’t have experience of engaging with discussions like this.

1. **Check-ins and reflections or worship sharing (20 minutes)**

Ask everyone to go round the circle and feedback briefly on how they found the homework from the first meeting and/or the preparatory materials for this meeting. For anyone who wants to share reflections on the preparatory materials, you might like to invite them to share whether Neil’s account of the testimonies and the excerpt from the new Quaker Peace and Social Witness strategy speaks to their experience. On Zoom, this could work by asking each person to pass on to someone else in the group after they have spoken. *In person, this could go round the circle.*

You may wish to ask everyone to limit their feedback to 1 or 2 minutes each (see facilitation tips at the end of the plan for meeting one).

Alternatively, you could opt for a period of worship sharing to reflect on the materials instead. You can use this [short guide to worship sharing](https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/worship-sharing-guidelines-fgcquaker) if helpful.

1. **What does your faith ask of you? (20 minutes)**

This activity will use something called a ‘wordflower’. Divide everyone into groups of 3-4. On Zoom, you can use breakout rooms to do this. *In person, ask people to turn to their neighbours and move their chairs away from the other small groups for more privacy.*

Ask one person to be the scribe for their group and to get a piece of paper and pen and write the words ‘Our faith’ in the centre of the page and draw a circle around it (which will form the centre of a flower). *In person, give each group a sheet of flip chart paper and ask the scribe for the group to do the same.*

The groups will have 15 minutes to discuss what their faith asks of them. In doing so, they might find it helpful to reflect on whether Neil’s account of the testimonies and the excerpt from the QPSW strategy speaks to their experience if they haven’t yet.

As people share, the scribe should record each new item in a separate petal around the central words. Encourage everyone to be aware of the time and ensure that each person in the group gets an opportunity to speak.

After 15 minutes have passed, bring everyone back together to share their wordflowers and reflect. On Zoom, bring everyone back from the breakout rooms to the main room. *There is no need to do anything if you are meeting in person.*

Invite the scribe for each group to display the wordflower for their group and 1 or 2 people from that group to share some of the words and discussion that came up. Ask each group to limit their feedback to a minute.

1. **Which Quaker testimony/ies do you feel most drawn to? Why? (10 mins)**

Now ask everyone to take some time for individual reflection. Invite them to cast their minds back to the preparatory material ‘Why we offer what we offer to Build Back Better’ and to the Quaker testimonies. You can give a very quick potted summary of this if you think it would be helpful.

Explain that everyone is welcome to reflect however works best for them. Some might find it helpful to journal or write down their thoughts. Others might like to visualise them, e.g. by embellishing or adding to their Quaker faith wordflower. Let everyone know that the notes or diagrams they make are for them and don’t need to be shared with the group (unless they want to!).

1. **How have Quakers been working to build a better social order (towards Heaven on earth)? (20 mins)**

Bring everyone back together for a final whole group exercise. Invite everyone to now cast their minds back to the preparatory material ‘Building back better after times of crisis’. Explain that this material provides some examples of historic Quaker work to build a better social order.

Encourage people to share reflections on the material and ask everyone whether they can think of any more contemporary examples of ways Quakers work to build a better social order.

If you think it might be helpful to offer the group some prompts, you can use any of the following questions:

* How do we in this meeting support one another?
* How do we in this meeting support others?
* What do staff at Quakers in Britain work on for Britain Yearly Meeting?
* What Quaker groups do you know of that are interested in social action (locally, nationally and internationally)?

1. **Closing (10 minutes)**

Thank everyone for coming.

Announce who will be facilitating the final meeting (or arrange someone to facilitate if it hasn’t yet been arranged).

Remind everyone / confirm / arrange the date for the final meeting.

Remind everyone to take a look at the homework from this meeting and the preparatory materials for the next meeting before you come together again.

*Optional:* go round the circle and ask each person to say one word to capture how they are feeling at the end of the meeting.

*Optional:* Closing reading. Read something related to social change that inspires you.

Closing silence / worship.