

Participating in Meeting for Worship

Waiting in silent expectation and prayer for guidance from the Light Within – the basis for Quaker Meeting for Worship

Preparing

Friends who set aside time each day for meditation, personal prayer, or reflection, often find it strengthens and deepens their experience with the living silence of Meeting for Worship. Such preparation readies the mind and opens one's heart & spirit to engage in deep communion with others.

Listening

Not all vocal ministry will be equally meaningful to all present. Be patient. Take care to separate the message from the minister. Test your own reactions: Where do they come from? Are you listening through to the Light behind the message, listening for the Love behind the words? As George Fox advised, "avoid judging any openly during the Meeting."

Waiting

Be sure to allow adequate time between spoken messages, so that they may settle in the silence and be truly absorbed. In general, Friends counsel against speaking more than once in a Meeting.

Speaking

If you feel moved to speak, take a moment to test your message. Is it from the inward Light? Is it meant only for you, or for the entire Meeting? When one is moved by the Light to speak, such ministry is often preceded by a physical uneasiness, a "heart pounding weakness," from which our name Quaker is derived. If you are so led, please stand and speak simply and clearly in language that reflects your spiritual experience. Do not feel compelled to explore all the implications of your insight. Leave room for the Light to work through the next person, potentially building on your words and extending them in an unexpected direction.

Concerns? Contact a member of the Ministry and Worship Committee.

(Compiled by the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting Ministry & Worship Committee from suggestions of Friends General Conference and other unprogrammed Meetings.)