

“What Is Thy Witness?”

Quakerism offers a long history of bearing “witness” to Truth. For many Friends over the years, the revealing experience of the Inward Light has led them to let their “lives speak” as a witness to justice, peace making, equality, compassion, and honesty – all as an expression of God's love.

Witness may be both private and public. Quakers are known by the general public by our public acts of witness. We are well known for our active peace testimony. But our lives speak in personal and private ways too. We can go about our daily lives cultivating personal habits that might, for example, exemplify small kindnesses or walk on the earth with an ever smaller footprint.

This program will offer a non-judgmental setting to explore both our meeting's and our own individual witness to our values. As modern Quakers, are we satisfied with our witness to the world? Do our meetings adequately witness to their collective values? Do I let my *love* speak?

Saturday Morning Session

- 9:00 Silent Worship
9:40 Introduction of Program
9:45 Presentation by Chuck Fager and Q&A: **A historical perspective on the nature of Quaker Witness
– The connection of the Spiritual and the Political –**
- 10:30 Break
10:45 Small Group Discussions: (Claremont process*, 5 per group)
Brief introductions (name, meeting, something that I enjoy)
Three Rounds:
1. Personal reaction to the presentation and discussion.
2. What makes me a Quaker –my belief, my religious practice, my witness?
3. Does my Meeting adequately witness to its values? Do I participate in such witness?
- 11:20 Brief reports from groups (followed by some discussion.)
12:00 Settling Out

Saturday Afternoon Session

- 1:00 Settling In
1:15 Presentation by Chuck Fager: **The many faces of modern Witness.
– Examples of letting a life speak –**
- 1:30 Small Groups: (Claremont process*, same groups as AM)
Three Rounds:
1. What are my most important beliefs and why?
2. In what ways do I publicly or privately witness to my beliefs?
3. How do I determine which of my beliefs I will publicly witness to and which ones will be privately engaged?
- 2:10 Group summary reports. (Confidentiality will be respected.)
2:30 Summary Discussion
2:45 Worship, Settle Out.
3:00 Adjourn

***“Claremont Dialogue” process.** *Each person in the group has the opportunity to speak to the prompt in each round. However, no one is required to speak. It is expected that no one should make a direct response to another's comments. (This is not a conversation and others should quietly listen to each speaker in turn.) In each round, all group members must speak or “pass” before someone speaks twice. Only after all rounds of speaking/listening are fully over, may conversation ensue.*