

# Quaker Dialogues

## List of Topics and Associated Readings

### 1. Seekers and Finders: The Experience of Early Friends

#### Reading

Howard Brinton *Friends for 350 Years* - Chapter 1 - First printed 1952 this text is a classic introduction to Quaker history and belief. Although some of the language is outdated, it is widely used by those seeking a basic introduction to Quakerism as practiced by unprogrammed Friends.

William Penn's *Preface to George Fox's Journal* – William Penn (1644 – 1718) , prolific writer and founder of Pennsylvania, was a younger contemporary of George Fox (1624 – 1691), who is generally recognized as the “organizing” genius” of the Quaker movement (Brinton, p.8). Penn's Preface describes Fox as early Friends knew him, focusing on his character not only as a great religious leader but also as a human being who was, for example , “very temperate, eating little and sleeping less, though a bulky person”(pp.xlvii-xlvi).

*The Journal of George Fox* – Chapter 1 – George Fox's own account of his life. It is not a Journal in the sense of a day-to-day record , and much of it was written many years after the events described. It is rather Fox's remembrances and assessment of his life.

Margarete Fell Selections, from London Yearly Meeting *Christian Faith and Practice* – Margarete Fell (1614 – 1702) made her home the center of the early Quaker movement and held together a large network of Friends traveling in the ministry. She authored a pamphlet “Women's speaking justified... “ which defended the then highly controversial claim of Friends that women should be free to speak in worship on the same basis as men.

Edward Burrough, *The Death of Mary Dyer* (photocopied) – Mary Dyer (1615? - 1660) was one of four Friends hanged in Boston for returning after banishment o the Puritan colony to proclaim spiritual truth as she experienced it. Edward Burrough,a traveling minister who wrote about her witness and helped end the New England hangings, was among the 500 Friends who died in England in prison of from the effects of imprisonment before religious persecution of Quakers ended.

### 2. The Light Within

#### Reading:

Howard Brinton, *Friends for 450 Years* Chapters 2-3 (pp.19 – 49 only)

### 3. Quaker Universalism

#### Reading:

Samuel D Caldwell, former Secretary General of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) , presented “That Blessed Principle... “ as an address to the Quaker Universalist Fellowship in 1988. It is a clear, succinct argument for a Quaker universalism that recognizes and draws from the spiritual wealth of many religious traditions. This article is one of many he has written on this general theme.

### 4. Worship and Ministry

#### Readings:

John Pushon, *Encounter with Silence* , pp. 22 – 28, 58 - 65, 74 – 91- formerly an attorney, politician and Quaker Tutor at Woodbrooke, a Friends study center in Birmingham England, now Quakerism at Earlham, School of Religion, Richmond. IN. *Encounter with Silence* is both autobiographical and reflective on the Quaker tradition of worship.

Thomas Kelly (1893 0 1941), *The Gathered Meeting* - professor at several colleges, including Earlham and Haverford, was revered as a teacher and speaker. He is best known for “*A Testament of Devotion*.”

### 5. Living in the Light: Quaker Witness

Reading:

Brinton Chapter 7

Margaret Hope Bacon, "Quaker Women as Abolitionists", Chapter 7 in *As The Way Opens* (Photocopied)). M Margaret Hope Bacon is a member of Philadelphia Central Meeting, is an author, feminist and former news director for the American Friends Service Committee. She wrote *The Quiet Rebels: The Story of the Quakers in America; Valiant Friend, a biography of L Mott* and several other books.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, *Faith and Practice*, revised 1997, "Concerns, Leadings, and Testimonies" (pp.65 – 67) and "Living in the World" (pp. 74 – 81).

## 6. Getting Down to Business

Reading:

Brinton Chapter 6

Michael L. Sheeran, *Beyond Majority Rule*, pp.47 – 71, 91 – 106. - Michael Sheeran, a Jesuit priest, researched Quaker decision making in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for two years while doing doctoral study at Princeton University. *Beyond Majority Rule* resulted from this research.

Full text source of the readings are available from the FGC Bookstore ( <http://www.quakerbooks.org/>)

photocopy excerpts are available from the Meeting Website

( [http://www.milwaukeequakers.org/members/index\\_members.html](http://www.milwaukeequakers.org/members/index_members.html) ) in the Adult RE Committee folder.