

What do Quakers mean when they say...? A GLOSSARY

Brought to you by:



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Advices

Extracts from minutes and epistles of early Friends intended to supply guidance, caution and counsel to monthly meetings and their members on various aspects of daily life.

Attender

A person who worships regularly with Friends but has not joined the Religious Society of Friends.

Benevolences

The Chapel Hill Friends Meeting makes donations to organizations or charities that support our Quaker values.

Birthright

Until the late 1940s a person who was born to a Quaker family automatically became a member of the Society by right of birth, hence birthright. Nowadays an application must be made to become a member of the Society. Since then the term has come to be used more loosely to describe any Friend born of Quaker parents.

Care and Counsel

The committee tasked with pastoral care in unprogrammed Meetings. This includes the formation and supervision of clearness committees, a unique and confidential process open to those who seek corporate assistance in reaching clarity in a decision. Friends form Clearness Committees for a number of reasons including membership considerations, marriage under the care of the meeting, and difficult discernments.

Centering or Center Down

The initial stage of worship when Friends clear their minds and settle down to achieve a spiritual focus.

Christocentric

A Quaker whose inspiration is essentially Christian.

Clearness

A process undergone to discern true leading, especially in ambiguous or complicated situations. Friends often work with clearness committees when struggling with a difficult issue.

Clerk

A person appointed by a business meeting or committee to take a meeting through its business; the only officer of most meetings (as there are no clergy); the person charged with making and keeping the records of the meeting (including the records of births, marriages, and deaths). The clerk's role is to serve as an honored servant of the meeting and, whilst revered, is not an authoritarian position.

Committee

A group of Friends who gather to work on a Meeting-related task.