

Faith: What do we believe?

The Religious Society of Friends (also known as the Quakers) is a unique faith community that encourages individuals to be spiritual seekers. This allows for a rich tapestry of shared experiences in which the following beliefs are generally held:

- **There is that of God in everyone.**
We are all created equal.
- **An active relationship with God is the starting point for a purposeful peaceful life.**
- **God continues to reveal Truth to us in many ways including:**

The Inward Search

Through Spiritual Self Discipline:
Prayer, Meditation, Study, &
Openness to God's Leadings

The Outward Search

Attempting to live with:
Integrity, Honesty, Equality,
Nonviolence, Simplicity, & Humility

The Community Search

Quaker Worship & Decision-making:
Gathering to wait on the word of God
& reaching a spiritual sense of the Meeting

Traditions We Observe

Simplicity is central to our way of worship. Quakers wait in silent worship for messages from God through those assembled. Christian holidays are observed, but usually without extravagance. Sacramental rites like baptism, communion, and reciting creeds, are not practiced. Some but not all Meetings include music in their gatherings.

A Quaker wedding is a special Meeting for Worship, where the couple recites their own vows and those gathered offer prayers and messages out of the silence. The entire assembly acts as the clergy and the witnesses who marry the couple.

A Quaker memorial service is similar to the concept of a wedding. All in attendance who want to speak in loving memory of the dearly departed have an opportunity to do so through a specially called meeting for worship. This is a very personal, rich experience.

Southern Quarter's Meetings

Southern Quarter is the regional organization of the Quaker Meetings of Delmarva in lower Delaware and the Eastern Shore of Maryland. It is affiliated with Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Visit delmarvaquakers.org

All are welcome to join us in worship!!

Camden Friends Meeting

Meetings for worship are held on Sunday's at 11AM September - May; at 10AM June - August.
Call: 302-698-3324

122 East Camden-Wyoming Avenue
Camden, Delaware 19934
Visit camdenquakers.org

Lewes Worship Group

This new group meets under the care of Camden Meeting in Lewes, Delaware on Wednesdays at 7pm and Sundays at 10:30am.
Check Camden's website for current contact information and meeting locations.

Chester River Friends Meeting

Worship is held Sundays at 11AM.
Call: 410-778-1503
124 Philosopher's Terrace
Chestertown, Maryland 21620
Visit chesterriverquakers.org

Third Haven Friends Meeting

Worship is at 10AM on Sundays and at 5:30 on Wednesday evenings.
Call: 410-822-0293
405 South Washington Street
Easton, Maryland 21601
Visit thirdhaven.org

Wicomico River Friends Meeting

Worship is held Sundays at 11AM.
Meetings are held in Salisbury Maryland.
At the time of this publication, a Meetinghouse building project was under way. Call or check their website for the current meeting address.
Call: 410-749-9649
Visit wicomicoriverquakers.org

Come join Delmarva's Quakers in Worship & Fellowship



**Southern
Quarter**
of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
The Religious Society of Friends

Practice: How does faith direct us?

Quakers in our area practice unprogrammed worship. They do not have a paid clergy. Each member is considered a minister.

- In unprogrammed Meetings for worship, Quakers gather in friendly expectant silence. Anyone who feels moved to speak, can do so, generally only once. Automatic responses and debate are discouraged. Instead, participants allow the messages to be heard prayerfully. Meetings usually last about an hour.

- Quaker communities test spiritual leadings about how to live in this world, and make decisions together through Quaker process. This is a Spirit-led "sense of the Meeting" which is reached through prayer and worship. This requires that time and care be spent to hear all relevant information and give all who want to be heard a chance to speak.

- Local Meeting communities make decisions without direct governance by a hierarchical structure. Larger Quaker organizations serve as support for the leadings of local groups, to help nurture each other spiritually, and to reach out to the world beyond each faith community. Southern Quarter is a regional entity of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. They are part of Friends General Conference, a worldwide Quaker organization of mostly unprogrammed meetings.

- Quaker respect for other religious and cultural traditions is based on the belief that there is that of God in everyone. Many Friends have a strong concern for social justice which leads them to volunteer in prisons and areas stricken with poverty; and to work for a more peaceful world. These activities are not required, but they often draw people to our communities.

- The study of the Bible, sacred texts from other religions, as well as works on equality, justice, environmental concerns, nonviolence, and ethics, are encouraged, and often are the basis for our friendly discussions. These help us to have greater insight into God's leadings. Our book of discipline, called **Faith & Practice**, has guidelines and resources for prayerful examination of our lives and practices.

Regional History

The Eastern Shore felt a Quaker presence as early as 1655. By 1660 there were at least three or four small communities of Friends. Kent Island Monthly Meeting, Bayside Monthly Meeting and Betty's Cove Monthly Meeting, were all active groups. During this period the Society's founder George Fox visited Quakers and native Americans in the region.

One meetinghouse, completed in 1684, served as the Third Haven Half Yearly Meeting House of Maryland Quakers. In 1693 Betty's Cove Monthly Meeting moved there, to become Third Haven Monthly Meeting. Several other meetings in the Chestertown area were started in the early 1700's Camden Meeting, just south of Dover, Delaware, was established in 1795. Their meeting house was built in 1805.

Colonial era Friends enjoyed good relations with Native Americans. But that led to distrust by some neighboring settlers. This along with a sense of isolation from other Quakers led many Friends to leave the area. Their Meetings were "laid down," closed, or joined with other congregations.

During the 19th century some Quakers on Delmarva were known to have aided runaway slaves on the Underground Railroad including Harriet Tubman.

For a time Camden and Third Haven were the only Quaker Meetings on Delmarva. In 1971 a Meeting reemerged in Chestertown, which became Chester River Meeting. In 1987 a worship group in Salisbury, Maryland was formed which soon became Wicomico River Friends Meeting. In 2006, a worship group was formed in Lewes, Delaware. A Quaker run retirement community called Cadbury at Lewes was completed in 2007.

The region is now known as Southern Quarter. Quarterly Meeting gatherings are marked by inspirational ministry, fellowship, interesting speakers and good food. The location rotates through the four Meetings. They are held on the third Sunday's of October, January and May.

Common Questions About Quakers

1. Why are we called Quakers?

Early followers were called The Religious Society of Friends Seeking the Truth. Those who gave ministry were filled with new found religious fervor. They were often nervous untrained speakers known for trembling when they spoke. A judge who disliked religious dissenters called some of them "Quakers" as he sentenced them to jail for speaking against the established church. The name stuck despite its derogatory connotation. It became a badge of authenticity representing the sincerity of the ministry of one "*filled with the Spirit of the Lord.*" It remains affectionately in our vocabulary. We are also commonly referred to simply as "*Friends.*"

2. What is the Quaker Peace Testimony?

Generally Friends believe in nonviolent response to all conflicts. Friends generally have joined the military only when they felt service would help bring an end to conflict. Those who are strict pacifists have been willing to go to jail rather than be drafted or pay taxes to a government that would fund the military. Many Friends have participated in alternative service during war time. Peace activism is a central ministry in the lives of many Quakers. In 1947 the American Friends Service Committee and British Friends Service Council jointly received the Nobel Peace Prize for their humanitarian relief efforts.

3. How do you become a member?

New attenders are encouraged to come to Meeting for Worship for at least one year, read about Quaker traditions, participate in committee work, and attend Meeting for Worship for the Purpose of Business. Attending a Quaker retreat or residential gathering, such as Philadelphia Yearly Meeting or the Friends General Conference, are also recommended. The interested person submits a letter requesting membership and a clearness committee is appointed to help them to explore their reasons for joining. After a positive recommendation from the committee, the new member is joyfully acknowledged at the next Meeting for Worship for the Purpose of Business.