

LESSON III: *WHEN TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME- MEETING FOR BUSINESS*

Opening

Meetings for business are meetings for worship which our business is conducted with the same openness to the leading of the Spirit.

Faith and Practice, p. 21,
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1997 revision.

Songs: Select from those in Lesson I and add "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind" found in *A Hymnal for Friends*, #83 (revised words are in *Songs of the Spirit*, #125).

Questions

1. When you are with a group of friends, how do you decide what you're going to do? Does everyone have a say?
2. Do you ever ask someone else to help you with a difficult decision? Do you ever ask God to help?
3. Do you know how Friends try to make decisions? Describe that process briefly.
4. Why don't Friends vote in Business Meeting?

Lesson III

For the Teacher

Little children make decisions just as adults do. Learning how to make decisions based on respect for the viewpoints of others is very important. Our belief in that of God in each person leads to a respect for other's views. For children this belief is best understood in terms of each person's specialness. Since Business Meeting also requires two-way communication with God, we will talk about prayer as a way of talking to God. Both themes, respect for one another and prayer, are important to business meetings and to Meeting for Worship. This week we will not have time to make a decision as a group, but we will put these ideas into practice next week.

Supplies Needed

Candle
Poster board
Precut pieces of colored paper for candle activity
Glue
Gray or white drawing paper
Colored chalk
Chalk board or newsprint

Song and Sharing Circle

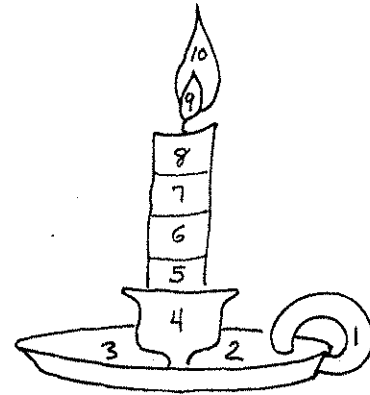
Sing the first verse and the chorus of the "George Fox Song", *Songs of the Spirit*, #3. Read the words, "A Light that is shining, Friend, in me and in you." Light a candle and place it in the middle of your circle. Ask the children to concentrate on the candle as you speak. Explain that a Quaker who lived a long time ago named George Fox said that God exists in each of us; he called this our inner light. Sometimes this light shines very brightly - when we are kind or helpful or happy; sometimes it shines less brightly - when we are unkind or sad or lonely or angry. But God is always with us. Each person is special to God.

Ask one or two children to move away from the circle. Look at the empty spot. When a person leaves, the circle is incomplete; each child is needed to make a complete circle. Ask the children who left to return. Extinguish the candle.

Group Art Activity

Make a picture of a candle together. Precut pieces of a candle, a flame, and a candle holder out of colored paper (see drawing). Number the pieces; the number does not matter, but have at least one piece per child. Help the children paste the pieces in order on a piece of poster board. If you have a large class, make two separate candles.

Label the poster "Walk in the Light" and sing the chorus of the "George Fox Song".



Game

Our light makes us special. We are all special in different ways. Have the children stand in a circle.

Children say: "Everyone is special"

In turn each child says: "I'm special because..."

Between each child's statement the group says "Everyone is special."

Thanking God

Sing "Johnny Appleseed's Grace", *Songs of the Spirit*, #70, or another familiar grace. Ask the children what the song is about. What do the words "thank the Lord" mean? One way we can let our lights shine is to talk to God. We can thank God for things we are happy about. What are some things you are thankful for? (give examples if necessary.) Make a list on newsprint. Ask the children to draw a picture of one thing they are thankful for. Use gray or white construction paper and colored chalk. Wet the paper first for an interesting effect. Label the pictures for the children. Share the pictures with the group.

The following finger play is an alternative to singing a grace:

We give thanks to you, O God (fold hands)
We give thanks to you
For rain (wiggle raised fingers and lower)
And sun (make circle with arms over head)
For feet that run (run in place)
For you (point to others) for me (self)
For everyone (stretch arms forward),
We give thanks to you, O God.

Asking God for Help

Choose one of these options:

- Teach the chorus of the song "Kum Bah Yah!" - #52, *Songs of the Spirit*. Explain that the words mean "Come by here"; they are a prayer asking God to be with us. Teach one of the other verses and then ask the children for other ideas for verses, for instance, "Someone's playing" or "Someone's smiling." Sing these new verses. With the class, make up hand motions for each verse.
- God can help us make choices. What is a choice? Play "Corners" (adapted from *For the Fun of It!* by Marta Harrison, Non-Violence and Children Committee). All the children stand in the middle of the room. Begin with choices such as "Which would you rather be - ice cream or cake?" or "blocks or tricycles?" Designate sides of the room for each choice. Move on to the harder issues: "Would you rather be a biter or a slapper?" in which neither choice is really appealing. Other ideas: "Would you rather clean up your room or go to bed early?", "Would you rather eat your peas or skip dessert?", "Would you rather share your toys or keep them locked away?". Make up issues relevant to your group. Let the children talk about their choices. Do you ever have to think about others when you make a choice?

Closing

Gather in a circle and re-light the candle in the center. Play the "Ready to Listen" finger play from last week's closing. Ask each child quietly to thank God for something or to ask for help with a choice. In meeting for Worship grown-ups sometimes share their thoughts. Tell the children that if they want to they may share their thoughts here. Sing "As We Leave This Friendly Place" and shake hands.