

## **Readings on Quakerism: Where to Start**

LEYM's Advancement & Outreach Committee encourages meetings and worship groups to have a variety of reading materials available to attenders and members. This can consist of a formal library or a crate of books that can be carried around. Making copies of the QuakerBooks and Pendle Hill catalogs available is also good.

FGC's Advancement & Outreach Committee has published a list of books that can serve as an introduction to Quakerism (<http://www.fgcquaker.org/ao/basic-library.html>). The following suggestions are based on that list. These are staples for a Quaker library for meetings or individual Friends.

### **Basic for about \$25**

The most basic general information about Quakers, their faith and practices can be found in the following 5 pamphlets from Pendle Hill (cost \$4.00 each plus shipping) along with a copy of *Faith and Practice*. (Note: LEYM does not have its own F&P, but uses Philadelphia's F&P as a guide. I personally also recommend Baltimore Yearly Meeting's F&P.)

Brinton, Howard. *Guide to Quaker Practice*. PHP 20, 1995. Basic guide to the practices of Friends in the context of belief.

Cooper, Wilmer. *Testimony of Integrity*. PHP 296, 1991. The central testimony among Friends from which all other testimonies evolve.

Morley, Barry. *Beyond Consensus, Salvaging Sense of the Meeting*. PHP 307, 1993. Three essential components in discovering a sense of the meeting; release, long focus, and transition to light, which are nurtured by worship.

Taber, William. *Four Doors to Meeting for Worship*. PHP 306, 1992. Describes four doors as thresholds into the heart of worship as communion with the invisible but eternal stream of reality in which is the living and eternal Christ.

Peck, George T. *What is Quakerism? A Primer*. PHP , 1995. Basics of Quakerism, including form of worship, lifestyle, activities in the world, structure and terminology.

*Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice*. A useful combination of description and quotations about the faith of Friends and their practices. \$7.

*Faith and Practice of Baltimore Yearly Meeting*. 1988. \$13.50. In addition to the usual sections of a Faith & Practice, it offers a set of appendices with useful suggestions for clearness committees, clerks, marriage under the care of the meeting, and sample letters for such things as traveling minutes. The section on practices and procedures is also helpful, as BYM's organization is similar to LEYM's.

### **For an additional \$50:**

Brinton, Howard, with historical update and notes by Margaret Hope Bacon. *Friends for 350 Years*. Pendle Hill, 2002, 348 pp. paperback \$16. A classic overview of the basic Quaker understandings and practices updated to include the 50 years since its first publication.

Gillman, Harvey. *A Light That Is Shining: An Introduction to the Quakers*. Britain Yearly Meeting, 1997. 2nd edition, 96 pp. Paperback \$7.00. A very readable introduction to Quakers and their beliefs. Reads well even ignoring the last section about how Britain YM works.

Pym, Jim. *Listening to the Light: How to Bring Quaker Simplicity and Integrity into Our Lives*. Rider Books, 1999. 192 pp. Paperback \$15.95. Somewhat longer and more expensive than the Gillman introduction, this is a great introduction to the beliefs of Friends and what that says for their practices. Includes advices and queries, a bibliography and other resources.

Religious Education Committee of FGC, illustrated by Signe Wilkinson. *The Quaker Way*. QP of FGC, 1998, 100 pp, paperback \$7.50. An up to date faith and practice handbook for ages 10 and up.

Steere, Douglas. *Introduction from Quaker Spirituality*. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1988. 56 pp. Paperback \$3.95. A good description of many aspects of Quakerism as it was and is presently lived. Bibliography. The full volume; *Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings*, published by Paulist Press, reprinted 1996, 334 pp paperback. \$22.95; contains extensive selections from the writings of George Fox, John Woolman, Caroline Stephens, Rufus Jones and Thomas Kelly, and is good for libraries which don't have these Journals and writings.

## **Other basics to add as space and funds permit**

### **Quaker Classics:**

*Journal of George Fox*, John L. Nickalls, editor

*Barclay's Apology in Modern English*, Dean Freiday, editor.

*A Testament of Devotion*, by Thomas Kelly.

*Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman*, Phillips Moulton, editor.

### **Quaker History:**

Newman, Daisy, *A Procession of Friends*. Friends United Press, 1992, 460 pp paperback \$17. Very readable look at American Quaker history often through the lives of Friends.

Bacon, Margaret Hope, *The Quiet Rebels*. Pendle Hill, revised edition 1999 240 pp paperback, \$12. Story of American Quaker movement in updated language.

Barbour, Hugh, and Frost, J. William, *The Quakers*. Friends United Press, 1994, 418 pp. Paperback, \$30. In-depth look at the Quaker movement in the U.S. from 1650 to 1993. Includes brief biographies of key people in that history.

### **Other References:**

*One Explorer's Glossary of Quaker Terms*: by Warren Sylvester Smith, ed. Mae Smith Bixby, rev. by Deborah Haines. QP of FGC, 1983, revised 1992 and 2002. 36 pp, staple bound, \$10.00. Invaluable aid for speaking and understanding Quakerese.

*Fostering Vital Friends Meetings: A Handbook for Working with Quaker Meetings*. By Jan Greene and Marty Walton. QP of FGC, 1999. 128 pp. Paperback \$12. This handbook provides guidelines for the work of fostering vitality in our meetings.

Loring, Patricia, *Listening Spirituality, Volume I: Personal Spiritual Practices Among Friends*: Openings Press, 1997 208 pp. Paperback \$16. and Volume II Corporate Spiritual Practice Among Friends: Openings Press, 1999, 299 pp paperback \$15. Guide to the theory and practice of spiritual formation first for the individual and second for the community and its corporate discernment.

All of these can be ordered from QuakerBooks of FGC, 1-800-966-4556 or [www.quakerbooks.org](http://www.quakerbooks.org), which also offers many other good resources.

LEYM Advancement & Outreach Committee  
2006