

# Quaker Testimonies & Commitments

## Testimonies

The word testimony is used by Quakers to describe a witness to the living truth within the human heart as it is acted out in everyday life.

These testimonies reflect the corporate beliefs of the Society, however much individual Quakers may interpret them differently according to their own light. They are not optional extras, but fruits that grow from the very tree of faith. There are a number of testimonies that Friends try to live by.

## Peace

The Quaker Peace Testimony is the testimony most frequently associated with Quakers. Peace is seen by Quakers as far more than a rejection of warfare. In the silent meditation and prayer of the Quaker Meeting for Worship, and in our search in daily life for that of God in all other people, Quakers have sought to develop an ethos which puts love of our fellow human beings into practice.

## Simplicity

A simple lifestyle freely chosen is a source of strength. Friends believe simplicity should be a way of life. It allows them to concentrate on seeking the Truth and avoid being distracted by worldly materialism.

## Integrity

Integrity is a condition in which a person's response to a total situation can be trusted: the opposite of a condition in which he or she would be moved by opportunist or self-seeking impulses.

Early Quakers or Friends found that their experience of living in the Light caused them to examine themselves and avoid deceit. Truthful dealings with all comers became a way of life for them. Taking oaths implies a double standard of truth; in choosing to affirm instead, be aware of the claim to integrity you are making.

Friends became renowned for their honesty, and early Friends were entrusted with people's money and became bankers (for example, Barclay's Bank in England, which began as a Quaker bank).

## Equality

Friends believe there is that of God in everyone (and in the natural world). That means in the eyes of God, everyone is equal. Quakers have therefore worked for equal rights for all men and women, regardless of race, creed or sexual preferences.

# Commitments

In addition to the Testimonies, Friends strongly commit to building kind and supportive relationships with everyone and to caring for the environment, which sustains us all.

## Community

Friends are called to sustain caring relationships for everyone, both within the Quaker meeting and in our neighborhoods, cities, nations, and world. Community is the necessary foundation for justice and peace. As we live in a community to honor that of God in all, we are, as individuals, strengthened in the work to which we are called, we see and speak from that of God in ourselves to that of God in others when we discover and acknowledge our common ground and common good. We see Jesus' commandment to love one another as a command to be in community. Within Friends' spiritual community, the collective search for truth, undertaken in Meeting for Worship, is the foundation for the beloved community to which Friends aspire. Living our faith is not a private matter. It calls us outward to the needs of the community at large.

## Earthcare

Friends are strongly committed to care for the environment and have outlined what it means to “walk softly over the Earth”.

These first thoughts stand as an indicator of a Quaker commitment to caring for our environment

- We affirm the Spirit in all things — all creatures, the waters, the air and the earth itself.
- We open ourselves to learn from the Spirit in the whole of creation for it is the source of our wisdom and truth.
- We acknowledge the need to replace our culture of domination and exploitation with a culture of community.
- We affirm that our true community is with all life on this planet.
- We acknowledge that our use of resources is threatening the survival of other species and damaging the health of ecological communities and the planet as a whole.
- We acknowledge human-induced climate change as a result of our population and our personal and corporate consumption.
- We acknowledge that time is limited, and we are called to inform ourselves, boldly discerning the way forward to act individually and collectively to heal and care for the earth.
- We seek to engage with the wisdom of Indigenous peoples and affirm our responsibility to ensure that generations to come inherit a healthy planet.
- We affirm that Quakers desire to strengthen their witness of caring for the Earth and we are inspired to act as guided by the Spirit.

*Adapted from Quakers Australia: [About Testimonies](#)*