

## What Might I Read to Understand Quakerism?

### BOOKS:

Ambler, Rex. The Quaker Way. 2013.

Ambler's mission is to make sense of how Quakerism works as a spiritual practice and why it has adopted its particular practices, e.g. Why do we sit in silence? Why do we not vote in meetings for business? Why do we insist on nonviolence? 144 pgs.

Borg, Marcus. Speaking Christian. 1989.

In *Speaking Christian*, Borg's purpose is to reclaim Christian language in all of its richness and wisdom. He discusses familiar Christian words in the context of their original scriptural meaning. 238 pgs.

Brinton, Howard. Friends for 350 Years.

This highly respected book details the history and beliefs of the Society of Friends from the beginning thru present day. 225 pgs.

Dandelion, Pink. The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction.

Concisely describes the history of the Quaker movement from its origins to the diversity of Quakers branches around the world today. 118 pgs.

De Hartog, Jan. The Peaceable Kingdom, 1971.

A novel about the Children of Light and their Holy Experiment set in England and the New World.

Navias, Mathilda. Quaker Process. 2012.

Navias provides historical context on how Quaker process has evolved, sharing common practices and variations used by contemporary Friends. She gives real life examples of Quaker process in action. It includes a glossary, index and annotated bibliography. It is a richly researched handbook that will answer many questions on Quaker process. 323 pgs.

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Faith and Practice.

A book of Christian discipline that outlines Friends beliefs, testimonies and practices and includes the organizational structure of Meetings. 214 pgs.

Punshon, John. Encounter with Silence. 1987.

John Punshon describes what he understands to be the essence of unprogrammed worship in sections that are titled "Silence in the Quaker Tradition," "An Experience of Unprogrammed Worship," "Starting to Worship Without Words," and "Beyond the Quaker Meeting". 131 pgs.

### PAMPHLETS:

Caldwell. *The Inward Light: How Quakerism Unites Universalism and Christianity*. PYM, 1997. 12 pgs.

Cronk, Sandra. *Gospel Order*. PHP 297.

Cronk discusses a Quaker understanding of faithful church community, i.e. listening to and responding to God, including “the inward life of worship and discernment, the interior functioning of the church-community...and the social testimonies of Friends.” 44 pgs.

Gates, Thomas. *Members One of Another: The Dynamics of Membership in Quaker Meeting*. PHP371.

Thomas Gates describes the dynamic, mutually supportive and reciprocal relation between the individual Friend and the Meeting. It includes an excellent bibliography for further reading. 38 pgs.

Gates, Tom. *Reclaiming the Transcendent: God in Process*. PHP422.

Tom Gates describes a vision of God that is less like a king and more like an energy field. In this way of understanding, God is like a verb rather than a noun; more like an activity that is going on everywhere rather than a being who exists somewhere. 32 pgs.

Martin, Marcelle. *Holding One Another in the Light*. PHP 382.

This is a personal account of the author’s experiences with what it means to “hold one another in the Light.” It takes many forms today from intercessory prayer, Meetings for healing, to a prayerful witness for peace on earth. 31 pgs.

Palmer, Parker. *A Place Called Community*. PHP 212.

Parker Palmer speaks passionately about society’s need for community and how Quakerism can contribute to that. He discusses the balance between individual needs and corporate leadings. 29 pgs.

Prevallet, Elaine. *Reflections on Simplicity*. PHP 244.

Elaine Prevallet is a Catholic sister who has taught, and been on staff, at Pendle Hill. She has also studied Zen Buddhism. “Reflections” is a deep discussion of simplicity as congruence between inner and outer life. 28 pgs.

Punshon, John. *Alternative Christianity*. PHP 245.

Punshon discusses how Quakers differ from the rest of Christianity. He uses 3 words to characterize Quakerism as an alternative Christianity: radical, charismatic, and prophetic. By these he means that Quakerism takes its final authority from the divine source not a human institution or doctrines, spirit will lead us into all truth, and what a *prophet* speaks is “inwardly from God.” 28 pgs.

Taber, William. *Four Doors to Meeting for Worship*. PHP 306.

William Taber describes a series of stages that he envisions as doors that help us to deeply enter into worship. 30 pgs.

Wajda, Michael, and Alison Levie. *Shaped by the Light: The Quaker Experience of Worship, Community and Transformation. Annual Walton Lecture 2001*. 22 pgs.

*Compiled by the Worship and Pastoral Care Committee, Red Cedar Friends Meeting, LEYM, 2016.*

