

Godly Play® and Faith & Play™

Pairing Godly Play® with Faith & Play™ gives children a basic knowledge of a set of core biblical stories, Quaker faith and practice, and the experience and witness of faithful Friends of the past. Each participant hears and responds to the stories in age appropriate ways, making the method ideal for meetings with grade-level classrooms as well as for small meetings where children are in a multi-age religious education program. Although the method clearly involves telling stories in a contemplative and highly visual manner, it is much more. It is creating a safe and welcoming environment that is conducive to wonder and worship. It is building intentional community. It is prayer. It is doing personal work that grows out of collective responses to stories and active wondering with others. It is nurture and blessing.

Godly Play® and Faith & Play™ acknowledge that God is active in children's lives long before they enter the religious education classroom. Both assume that even very young children already have spiritual lives. Both resources:

- ❖ are designed for children 3 to 12, but can also be used with teens and adults, and in multigenerational settings,
- ❖ are Montessori-inspired and experiential,
- ❖ use open ended questions that invite wonder and reflection,
- ❖ provide venues for exploring children's experience of God (or the great mystery, the spirit, the divine),
- ❖ give children images and language for talking about this experience and practice using this language in community,
- ❖ present a collection of stories about other people who have encountered the divine and been shaped or informed by these encounters, and
- ❖ are designed to be used with a particular method that requires training to be used effectively.

Godly Play® was created by Rev. Dr. Jerome Berryman and his wife Thea Berryman. Its origins are in the Episcopal Church, although its reach today is ecumenical. **Friends use this resource and method to explore stories from the Bible.** Bible material is presented in a way that invites children to experientially find themselves in the stories and makes space for continuous revealing of Truth. This helps many Friends to see this as a welcoming and Quaker-friendly way to approach the Bible and the Judeo-Christian heritage.

Faith & Play™ is for teaching about Quaker faith, practice and witness. (*Play* is children's practice, hence the name Faith & Play™ deriving from the title "Faith and Practice.") Faith & Play™ was created as a Quaker supplement to Godly Play® and is intended for the teacher trained in the Godly Play® method.

Trainings to learn how to use these resources are available for Friends through Faith & Play Stories, Inc. Learn more at: www.faithandplaystories.org