

Faith and Play Working Group Report to the Education Standing Committee

The Faith and Play Working Group has had a productive year. Faith & Play™ is a collaborative project with Friends General Conference (FGC), and our working group is comprised of six PYM Friends and one Baltimore Yearly Meeting member. (My membership remains with West Chester in PYM at this time.) We also have a broad network of Friends across the country, "corresponding members" of our group and part of a Godly Play/Faith & Play community of practice, who test new stories for us and provide important feedback for our work. 2015 will be the 10th year of our work together, and our energy and outreach continues.

This year we made significant progress on several new stories. In March, we released (as a free download) an *Easter Story for Friends*. We hope to make additions to the currently published collection in 2015, including three stories focused on Friends' witness: Elizabeth Fry's prison reform work, John Woolman's abolition ministry, and Margaret Fell's nurture of early Quakerism. Stories about Lucretia Mott and William Penn are in process. We are also working on stories about concepts of the Light and images of God. Based on our own experiences and feedback from Friends using currently published Faith & Play stories, we've begun to compile revision suggestions for a next edition.

We are very excited that under the care of New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM), Faith & Play stories have been translated into Spanish. We were approached by NEYM Friends a year ago as they hoped to make Faith & Play available to Friends in Latin America and sought permission from our working group and FGC publications for the translation rights. The working group consulted on the translation, and I co-edited it with Beth Collea, the NEYM Religious Education coordinator. "Jugar llenos de fe" will be a free download on the NEYM website. This summer, while Faith & Play stories are being used in our Children's Program at PYM Sessions, they will also be shared with Friends in Latin American on the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Quaker Youth Pilgrimage!

Our working group has worked hard to discern how to provide story sets to Quaker Books of FGC (the figures and materials used to tell the stories). We have developed a plan for replenishing the bookstore as needed, as well as a way to make unfinished kits available at a lower price, including documents providing guidance for making the kits. (We do not receive the sales revenue from these story sets, only reimbursement for our materials.)

The other piece of our work is to promote and support Faith & Play (and Godly Play) among Friends in PYM. Last October, we shared a newsletter and survey with the Faith & Play community of practice. This spring we launched a Faith & Play Facebook page, a place for fellowship and discussion.

Training for this storytelling curriculum is offered through FGC's programs, and several PYM meetings and schools sought this support in the past year. Trainings include work with the Faith & Play stories and Godly Play method, but also discussion of how to support children's spiritual lives and build spiritual community, and more broadly how to plan First Day School or Quaker studies curriculum. Groups of teachers from seven PYM meetings and Friends schools attended training workshops in 2013-14 (trainings were also held in three other YMs). As word continues to spread, trainings are being scheduled into 2015.

You asked how Education Standing Committee could support our working group. One of our unrealized hopes has been to place an ad in the *Friends Journal* about Faith & Play stories and where to learn more about Godly Play/ Faith & Play for Friends. We do not have a budget line in either organization of our collaboration, PYM or FGC, to help fund this idea. If the working group developed a plan for advertising and cost, could we explore this with you?

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