

## LESSON IV: *THE SEEKERS OF THE LIGHT ARE ONE-MEMBERSHIP*

### Opening

The test for membership should not be doctrinal agreement, nor adherence to certain testimonies, but evidence of sincere seeking and striving for the Truth, together with an understanding of the lines along which Friends are seeking that Truth.

Christian Faith and Practice, #368  
London Yearly Meeting, 1959.

*Songs:* Select from those in Lesson I and add: "Tis the Gift to be Simple", *Songs of the Spirit*.

### Questions

What gives you the feeling of belonging to a group?

When have you had the feeling that you are "in the place just right"?

### Lesson IV

#### *For the Teacher*

Being part of a group is important for children. The word "membership" will not mean much to this age group, but the concept of belonging will. Belonging requires giving and receiving. This week we talk about what being in a group requires and make up rules for our group. We also do a project which helps the Meeting, one of the groups to which the children belong.

#### *Supplies Needed*

Chalk board

Objects or pictures for the "Belonging Game"

Food for snack preparation (specifics will depend on what you decide to make)

Paper plates

#### *Opening Circle*

Ask the children what groups they belong to. List these groups on a chalk board or newsprint. Be sure to include "First-Day School Class" and "Meeting" on the list. Read a story about a family. Some suggestions: *A Baby Sister for Frances*, *Best Friends for Frances*, or *A Birthday for Frances*, all by Russell Hoban (Harper & Row); one of the Berenstain Bear books such as *The Berenstain Bears and the Messy Room* or *The New Baby* by Stan and Jan Berenstain (Random House); *Noisy Nora* by Rosemary Wells (Scholastic); *The Snowy Day*, *Peter's Chair*, or any of the other Ezra Jack Keats books about Peter (Viking); *The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown (Harper). Ask a few questions similar to these but tailored to the story you are reading:

What makes the child(ren) in this story feel part of the family?

How do the people in this family help each other?

Do both the children and the grown-ups help?

Belonging to a family or any group means we try to work together.

### *Belonging Game (optional)*

To help the children understand what belonging means, play the following game. Show the children groups of four or five objects or pictures. One object or picture does not fit with the group. Ask the children to identify the object or picture which does not belong. Ideas: four fruits and one vegetable, four mammals and one bird, four grown-ups and one child.

### *Playing and Working Together*

Play an active game with the children. Ideas: "The Farmer in the Dell", "Did You Ever See a Lassie", "Looby Loo", "The Mulberry Bush". (See below for directions to "The Mulberry Bush".) Directions for the other games are in most game books, but if you need help with any of them, call the Religious Education Committee Office (215-241-7221). After the game tell the children that in order to play that game they all had to work together and follow the game's rules or directions. What are some rules or directions we need to get along in this class? Go around the circle and get suggestions from as many children as possible. List the ideas. Discuss the suggestions. Decide which rules to keep and which to discard. Make a final list on a clean piece of newsprint. The children have just worked together to make a decision just as families do and just as the grown-ups in Meeting do. Post the rule list each week.

### *Directions for "The Mulberry Bush"*

The children form a ring, clasping hands and circling around as they sing the first verse, which is repeated between each of the other verses as a refrain. In the second and succeeding ones, the children stand still and pantomime the action described in the words:

"This is the way we wash out clothes,  
We wash our clothes, we wash our clothes.  
So early Monday morning."

The words "we wash our clothes" become "we iron our clothes", "we scrub our floor", "we mend our clothes", "we sweep the house" in the following verses; and Monday becomes Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday morning. Update the words to fit your group, e.g. "vacuum" for "scrub".

Here we go round the mul - ber - ry bush, the  
mul - ber - ry bush, the mul - ber - ry bush.  
Here we go round the mul - ber - ry bush, so  
ear - ly i - n the morn - ing.

### *Helping Activity*

Tell the children: "Today we are going to help other people in Meeting. We are going to make a snack for everyone in First-Day School. Being part of Meeting means finding ways to help people in the Meeting. Our job will be to prepare and serve these snacks; we are just like the grown-ups, who sometimes serve food before or after Meeting."

Have several snack preparation areas set up; you will need separate areas for every four or five children. You can prepare any number of simple, uncooked snacks. Here are four ideas:

1. Stuff celery sticks with peanut butter or cream cheese and dot the peanut butter with raisins.
2. Spread crackers with cream cheese and dot with raisins or candied fruit.
3. Mix softened cream cheese with chopped walnuts. Fill pitted sliced dates with one teaspoon of the cheese mixture.
4. Make cucumber sandwiches or date nut bread and cream cheese sandwiches.

Give each child a sturdy paper plate with a selection of snacks on it. Either ask the other classes to gather in one place or take the snacks to the different classrooms. The children will enjoy serving the snacks themselves, but you will need some extra adult help at serving time.

### *Alternative Helping Ideas*

- If you are meeting in the early spring, let each child start several marigold seeds in individual peat pots. The teacher will need to take these home until they are big enough to transplant.

Explain that when the plants grow larger (have a started plant to show them) you will plant them outside the meeting house. Read Ruth Kraus' *Carrot Seed* as the children work. This project requires making time later for the transplanting.

- If it is fall, plant bulbs around the meeting house.

*Closing*

End with "As We Leave This Friendly Place" and a handshake.