

ATTRACTING SEEKERS, ENERGIZING QUAKERS

A Campaign for the Future of Quakerism



THEE QUAKER PROJECT
QUAKER MEDIA FOR THE INTERNET AGE

Case for Support

INTRODUCTION

Thee Quaker Project offers an answer to the most important questions facing the Religious Society of Friends in the 21st century: how do we deepen our existing Quaker practice, grow the body of the Religious Society of Friends, and provide current and future generations with the spiritual resources they need to navigate an increasingly tumultuous world?

Early Quakers had several clear answers to these questions: a vibrant traveling ministry, direct challenges to the laws and customs of their time, and active and persistent communication through new media technology. They saw the printing press as an extension of the powerful vocal ministry they were given in meetings for worship and public speaking, and they adopted the new communication technology early and often. They spread their message of a direct unmediated connection to God widely through tracts and other publications to reach an audience of seekers who were disillusioned with the church and government of 17th century England in a time of great upheaval.

At *Thee Quaker*, we see many parallels with those early Friends. We too live in challenging times. Whether it be climate catastrophe, political turmoil, racial and economic injustice, war, or migration, we are undergoing rapid, tumultuous change. These oppressions weigh especially heavily on younger people who are hungry for tools to navigate the future. Like seekers in the 17th century, they too are looking for spiritual answers outside of the traditional church.

We believe that Quakers have a powerful faith practice that speaks to profound personal questions and worldwide challenges. However, people will only discover us if we establish a meaningful presence in the place where they most often search for answers: the internet. This conviction has given birth to Thee Quaker Project.

“This is such a powerful outreach to Quakers and others who are seeking spiritual community. It’s a much needed resource to share the good news about the Religious Society of Friends.”

—Kaye, Denver CO

We envision a thriving future for Quakerism, where—informed by the wisdom of our spiritual ancestors—we find our voice as a faithful, courageous religious society in the internet age.

Thee Quaker has created an online Quaker media ministry to reach seekers and Quakers, inviting them to take the next step on their spiritual journey. We are developing an ecosystem of high-quality, highly visible, distinctly Quaker storytelling and inspiration that crosses online platforms. We envision Thee Quaker as a spiritual and informational resource for individuals and Quaker meetings for decades to come. We are already seeing a major impact among online seekers, lapsed Quakers and others who want to learn more about Quakerism. This visible and accessible online ministry offers new openings for Friends' communities to receive an influx of enthusiastic, spiritually-hungry visitors and new members who long to be spiritually grounded in community while facing the big challenges in our world.

Grounded in Friends' practice to speak and act with integrity, Thee Quaker Project includes three interwoven components: a weekly podcast which covers a wide range of topics, a daily Quaker devotional message delivered to subscriber emails, and a partnership video service for Quaker Meetings to benefit from the expertise of our professional media-creation team. While each of the three components stands on its own as a valuable resource, together they create a powerful interlinked ecosystem of media projects.

Each project generates an expanse of opportunities for seekers to encounter the spirit life within and learn about Quaker faith and practice. Listeners of the podcast and readers of the Daily Quaker have expressed how this media is deepening their engagement and spiritual curiosity, often leading them through the doors of a Quaker meetinghouse.

“Thee Quaker inspired me to take a leap of faith and attend my first meeting. As a newcomer I was afraid that I would not be welcome, but that was the furthest thing from the truth. Thanks to your project, I have found a spiritual home.”

- Julie, Netherlands

OUR PROGRAMS

The Quaker Podcast

Podcasting has catapulted from obscurity to the mainstream in the last ten years, with one-third of Americans now reportedly listening to podcasts on a regular basis.

The Quaker Podcast launched in May 2023. Since then, we have built an audience of more than 4,000 unique weekly listeners from 121 countries, and that number is growing daily. Our podcast episodes focus on past and present stories of Quaker spiritual courage and introductions to Quaker faith and practice for a broad and diverse audience.



It takes something special to earn the trust of listeners and keep them coming back. That's why our podcasts are well-researched, well-executed, and consistently delivered audio journalism. ***The Quaker Podcast* was recognized by the Associated Church Press with their “best in class” award for audio storytelling in our first season.**

Listen at [QuakerPodcast.com](https://www.QuakerPodcast.com)

The Daily Quaker Message



The second component of our three-tiered Quaker ministry, the ***Daily Quaker Message***, offers a short spiritual quotation from Quakers and others, as well as an “Invitation,” suggesting a way to engage devotionally with that message. Each day includes a Query for the week and a different high-quality photo or drawing. Sometimes the Message links to a song or brief recorded message.

The **Daily Quaker Message** was launched in April 2024 offering a message every day for a 3-month pilot period. In that period the project garnered 2,000 email sign-ups with an average unique open rate of 68.7% –that’s double the industry standard of 34%. After a three-month break to redesign some elements based on reader feedback, daily installments returned in September 2024 to even more readers, with the number growing daily.

You can view the full archive of Daily Quaker Messages at [DailyQuaker.com](https://www.DailyQuaker.com)

Quaker Videos

In 2022, video made up [82% of all internet traffic](#). It's a fact that Friends can't ignore if we are to stay relevant in the internet age.



The third program of our revolutionary vision for the future of Friends, **Quaker Videos**, revolves around creating a regular Quaker presence on online video platforms. This project will range from playful “viral” Quaker videos, to short, vertical “TikTok” style videos, to intimate, high-production profiles of Quaker Meetings.

Our objective for Quaker Videos is to build a broad, engaged audience of viewers for whom Quakerism plays a role in their spiritual path—whether they are just discovering Friends or are ready to start attending a Meeting. We aim to build a broad reaching project that functions as a “funnel”—reaching millions of viewers to entertain, inform and inspire them—and eventually guiding them into discovery of their local Quaker community. Financially, the goal of Quaker Videos is to reach self-sustainability in its 5th year (2030) through a blend of monthly viewer support, advertising, and sponsored content.

Quaker Videos is a project in development. We are completing a pilot phase and expect to move into full production in 2025.

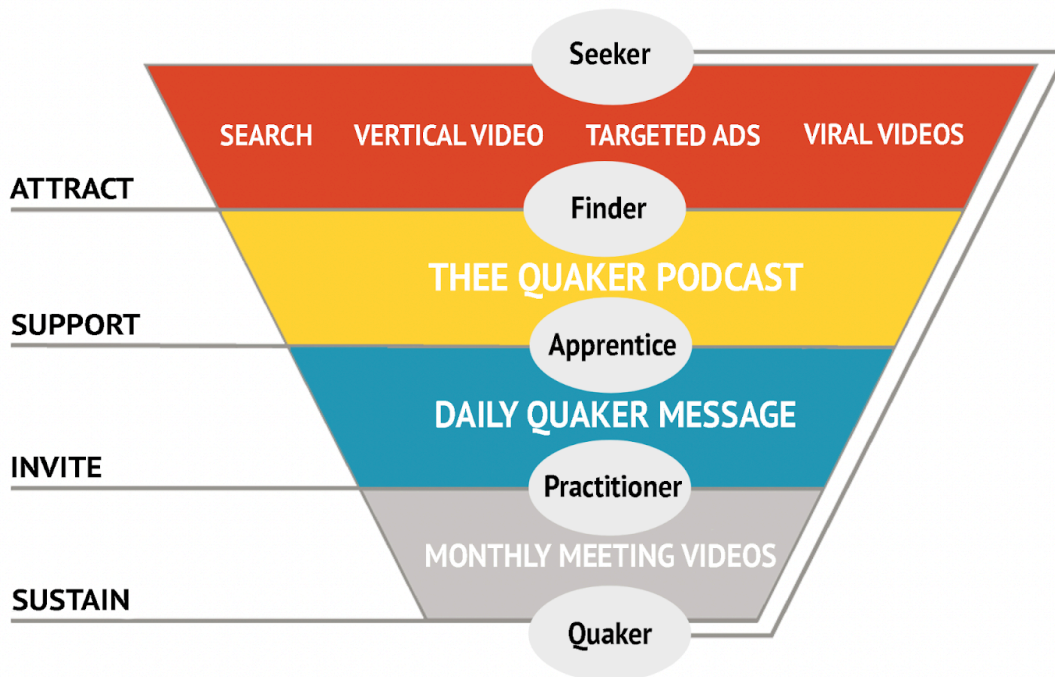
Watch our first pilot video, a Quaker Meeting profile:
youtube.com/@quakervideos

“I'm new to Quakerism as a religion, but evidently I've been a self-made Quaker my entire life. I will say, Thee Quaker has been an incredible resource for me to learn about who I Am. I feel more connected to a "spiritual history" or "ancestry" that I didn't know I had. Thank you. The production quality is excellent. The information is valuable. And connecting with it has been a Joy.”

—Jeremy F, Washington State

OUR AUDIENCE-BUILDING STRATEGY: THE PATH FROM SEEKER TO QUAKER

How an encounter with *Thee Quaker Project* invites users unfamiliar with Quakerism to take the next step on their spiritual path.



In the above visualization, we imagine our work as a funnel: each audience member sits on a spectrum from “never having heard of Quakers” to active attendance at their local Quaker meeting. Wherever a user discovers us in the spectrum of projects outlined above, our job is to invite them to move down the funnel to deeper engagement, eventually leading them to their local Quaker Meeting.

The top end of the funnel grows wider through effective and strategic outreach while the narrow end of the funnel grows with the effectiveness of our invitations.

“I credit Thee Quaker for increasing the weekly attendance of our meeting, which has broken attendance records several times in the last several weeks. It is not uncommon for there to be 6 or more young adults.”

—Logan J, Iowa

EARLY SUCCESS OUR MINISTRIES

In less than two years, *Thee Quaker* has touched thousands of lives and brought seekers meaningful ways to reflect on their own spiritual path and consider how they might come into Quaker faith and practice. 44,892 people have tuned in to listen to Thee Quaker Podcast. 2,000 people read the Daily Quaker Message. Already there are 140 monthly supporters to Thee Quaker Podcast and the Daily Quaker Message.

We could not have made these accomplishments without the early investments of numerous donors and several Quaker foundations. 346 Friends made generous donations since our very beginning, many before we had published any podcast or daily message. Some Quaker individuals and families have made gifts as large as \$50,000 and \$100,000. Quaker and other foundations have made investments ranging from \$2,000 to \$250,000. In our first two years since receiving our tax exempt status, we received more than \$500,000 in contributions.

As a modern Quaker media organization, we have a meaningful opportunity—and, we believe, a responsibility—to reach well beyond the current boundaries of Quakerism. We are nourishing all those who seek support on their spiritual path and who resonate with Quaker values, sentiment, and spiritual practices. We are achieving this outreach in a high quality, fully 21st century way.

Anticipated Outcomes

- Greatly increase the visibility of Quakerism
- Do so in a proven, high-quality way
- Speak to the spiritual hunger of people of all ages around the world
- Invite and attract tens of thousands of spiritual seekers to Quaker meetings
- Achieve financial sustainability through program income—reach self-sustainability in five years
- Receive positive feedback and evaluations for our ministry, including industry awards

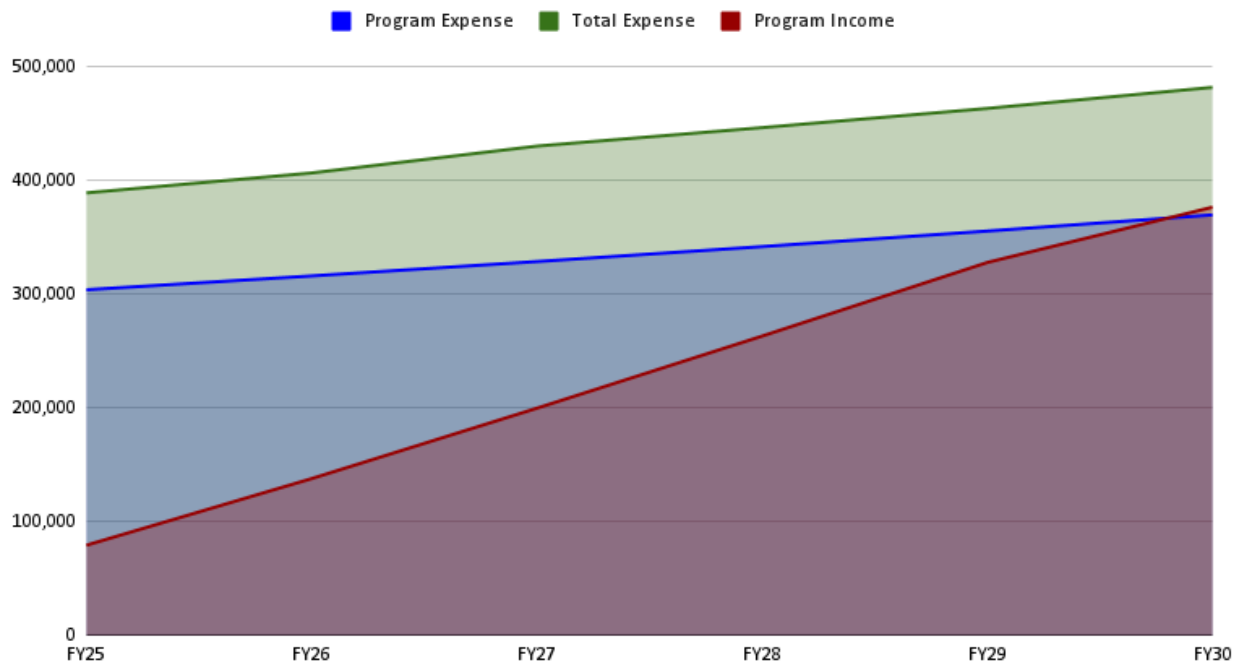
We now are seeking investments from Friends to enable Thee Quaker to more fully realize its vision.

AN AUDIENCE-FUNDED PROJECT OUR 5 YEAR PLAN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Thee Quaker seeks to innovate the Quaker funding model for the 21st century with the goal of generating the majority of our income from listener/viewer support by the fifth full year of our operations. *Thee Quaker* Podcast and The Daily Quaker Message are already building subscriber income. We expect fees for the Video Project to generate the largest portion of that project's income.

As an exciting Quaker startup organization with a proven record, we are developing a funding model that projects increasing program income and decreasing dependence on traditional fundraising revenue in the coming years. Investments in *Thee Quaker* during this startup period will enable the project to become increasingly self-sustaining over the next five years.

Program Expense vs Program Income



“I support this monthly because I hope you can help a new generation of seekers.”

—Frances B, New Hampshire

“I’m a supporter because the times call for a stronger voice for our Peace Testimony. I’m hoping social media can help.”

—Elizabeth D, Illinois

TABLE OF INVESTMENTS REQUESTED

Our Campaign Goal: \$1 million

Gift Size	Number Gifts Needed	Total \$ this Level	Cumulative Total
\$ 250,000	1	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000
\$ 150,000	1	\$ 150,000	\$ 400,000
\$ 100,000	2	\$ 200,000	\$ 600,000
\$ 50,000	3	\$ 150,000	\$ 750,000
\$ 25,000	4	\$ 100,000	\$ 850,000
\$ 10,000	6	\$ 60,000	\$ 910,000
\$ 5,000	10	\$ 50,000	\$ 960,000
Less than \$5,000	many	\$ 40,000	\$ 1,000,000

THEE QUAKER PROJECT
BOARD AND STAFF

**Thee Quaker Project
Board of Directors:**

Holly Baldwin
Gary Farlow
Dan Kasztelan
Mackenzie Morgan
Lisa Motz-Storey
Jennifer Newman
Trayce Peterson
Diane Randall
Andy Stanton-Henry
Traci Hjelt Sullivan
Fritz Weiss

Thee Quaker Staff

Jon Watts: Executive Director
Georgia Sparling: Podcast Producer
Maeve Sutherland: Daily Quaker
Message & Social Media Coordinator
Hannah Mayer, Operations Coordinator
Michael Wajda, Fundraising Consultant

TESTIMONIALS

Thee Quaker Podcast

“The best thing to happen to all Quakers since Quakerspeak.”
-Chris from Washington

“I credit Thee Quaker Podcast for increasing the weekly attendance of our meeting. Our Meeting has broken attendance records several times in the last several weeks. A part of that is our growing number of young adults. Last year at this time I would often be the only attendee that was under 35 - now it is not uncommon for there to have 6 or more young adults.

I think Thee Quaker Podcast has helped each Seeker and returning member connect with the history of Quakerism and their own spirituality. When you sit in silence each Sunday you don't learn about the faith's history. Thee Quaker Podcast has filled that "Sunday School" role for a lot of us.”
-Logan from Iowa

omg I am so unbelievably excited - not a Quaker but have been to some meetings and really enjoyed them! I've always had trouble finding Quaker content. thank you Friends.
-C, Apple podcast listener

I love the information and the format. I find listening to Thee Quaker Podcast uplifting, inspiring and reassuring that good things do go on in this conflicted world we are living in.
-Ann from Rhode Island

As a non-Quaker, I've been most inspired by certain individuals' messages- O's approach to intimacy and the guy who talked about God in/as his body, for example. I also love the episodes devoted to courageous resistance (Naylor, the underground railroad) because these are real people leading by example who make me want to lean boldly into my beliefs.

I get more out of my visits to Meeting because I know so much more about the tradition and feel like I got to know some members as guests on the podcast.

Anonymous, Philadelphia

I am very new to Quaker ideas and explorations, but Thee Quaker podcast has gently supported my understanding and experience in such an honest and open way that it has felt freeing and connecting. Then, attending a meeting for worship following listening to the podcast, I had a sense of home. Thank you for all you do.
-Anonymous from Oregon

The Daily Quaker Message

"It's very meaningful to receive these daily messages in my inbox in a flood of otherwise stressful emails. I find these to be centering and personal, inviting me to connection with the divine and with a community."

-Leenah in Illinois

"I am a Quaker who no longer attends Meeting. The messages speak to me and keep me feeling I am connected to others. Thank you."

-Sadie, Lawrence, KS, Oread Friends Meeting

"I became a Quaker 30+ years ago by way of being the on-site caretaker of a Meeting House. I literally went just to learn the job, immediately felt at home, and began attending Worship. I was there over 25 years and lost my connection to Friends when I moved to where there was no Meeting nearby. The Daily Quaker Message found me recently at a very difficult time of my life, providing me with a reconnection to my faith community that has helped me heal. I am now house hunting for retirement and this time will only go where there is a Friends community."

-Wendy L, CA

"I've had off and on connections with Quakerism since attending Quaker-founded Swarthmore College, but only within the past few weeks have started attending my local meeting regularly with the thought of eventual membership a possibility in my mind. So I've been reading both early and recent writing by Friends, and also made use of online resources like the Thee Quaker podcast and the Daily Quaker Message. Many of the messages and/or essays they link to have broadened my understanding of contemporary (or early!) Quakerism, and led me to other writing by their authors. It has been a good supplemental to the vocal ministry in my mostly-silent meeting."

-David S, Charlottesville, VA

"I discovered the Daily Quaker Message as I was starting to fully take the next steps in my spiritual journey - I had known about Quakerism for quite some time but didn't know how to approach it. As I was moving away from my Orthodox and Atheist background, I found that whilst Quakerism fit with my spiritual beliefs perfectly I didn't know how to practice or put it in action alone."

The Daily Quaker Message really helped me find a sense of community and also a way to actually connect with my beliefs in a tangible way - it helped me feel confident enough to go to local meetings knowing that there were other people who cared about the same issues and wanted to explore and understand what it means to be a Quaker."

- Nicole L., Scotland

"Thee Quaker inspired me to take a leap of faith and attend my first meeting. As a newcomer to the Netherlands I was afraid that I would not be welcome, but that was the furthest thing from the truth. Thanks to your project, I have found a spiritual home."

- Julie, Netherlands