

# **Here Come the Apprentices:**

**Renewal While Helping your Meeting/Church Connect  
with its Community**

**Welcome**

**Centering Worship**

**Introductions**



# About Wess



**Identify: Who Are the Apprentices: Who is co-leading the way?**

**Identify: Where are we? (Context)**

**Identify: Who are we? Who are we taking with us?  
What is our center? (Tradition)**

**Identify: Where are we going? What are we called to do? (Renewal)**

**Identify: Next steps - Setting out with intention**





# What's In Your Backpack

- Activity: What Do You Need For the Journey? What are you going to keep in your backpack?\*\*
- 2-3 Favorite, inspiring texts to bring with you
- 1-2 Inspiring artist (music, fine art, otherwise)
- 2 Spiritual Friends or Mentors. - Who Are You Bringing With You?
- 2 Favorite Snacks
- 1 Thing you like to do to rest / feel refreshed?
- 1 Favorite notebook and pen/pencil
- 1 Thing in your bag that will be extra weight on this journey? Something that may hold you back?
- 1 reminder to yourself
- 1 prayer

**Terms**

**Renewal:** Putting the embodied community in dialogue with tradition and context.

**Outreach:** Parker Palmer, mattering to our zip code, being the people of God in our community, being the Quakers.

**“The mission of the church is not to enlarge its membership, not to bring outsiders to accept its terms, but simply to love the world in every possible way—to love the world as God did and does.” – Parker Palmer**

**Who are the  
apprentices?**



**Apprentices are self-aware of their tradition. They help to carry the community forward into the future.**



Apprenticing Photo by [Bailey Torres](#) on [Unsplash](#)



**Apprentices understand that in important ways they are subject to that tradition, its community, elders, and original texts, while they are also co-creators of that tradition.**



A Part of a Longer Tradition Photo by [Clay Banks](#) on [Unsplash](#)

**Apprentices take responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of their community.**

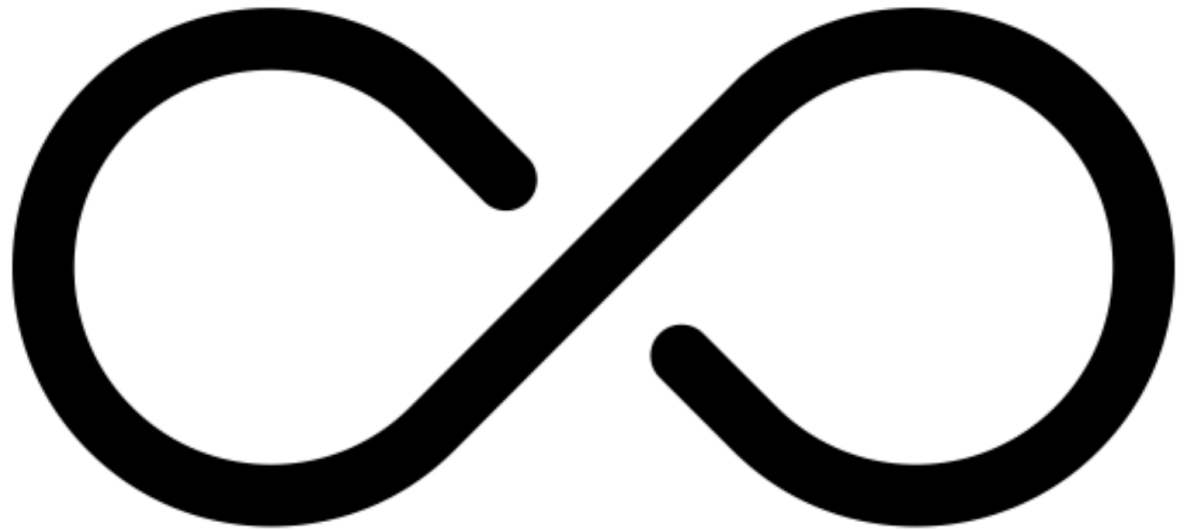


Apprenticing Photo by [Bailey Torres](#) on [Unsplash](#)

> Edwin Friedman: A group of clergy came to me from one of the major religious denominations and said, "We are about to start a project that will raise fifty million dollars for our five hundred most troubled ministers. How would you spend it?" I responded, "Why would you put the fifty million into your five hundred most troubled? You will advance your denomination and our society far more if you put it into your five hundred best." They answered, "But we could never raise the money for that." A Failure of Nerve by Edwin Friedman, P. 80

The trek from newbie to  
lurker to participant to  
creator/apprentice and  
back again.

- Dr. Ryan Bolger

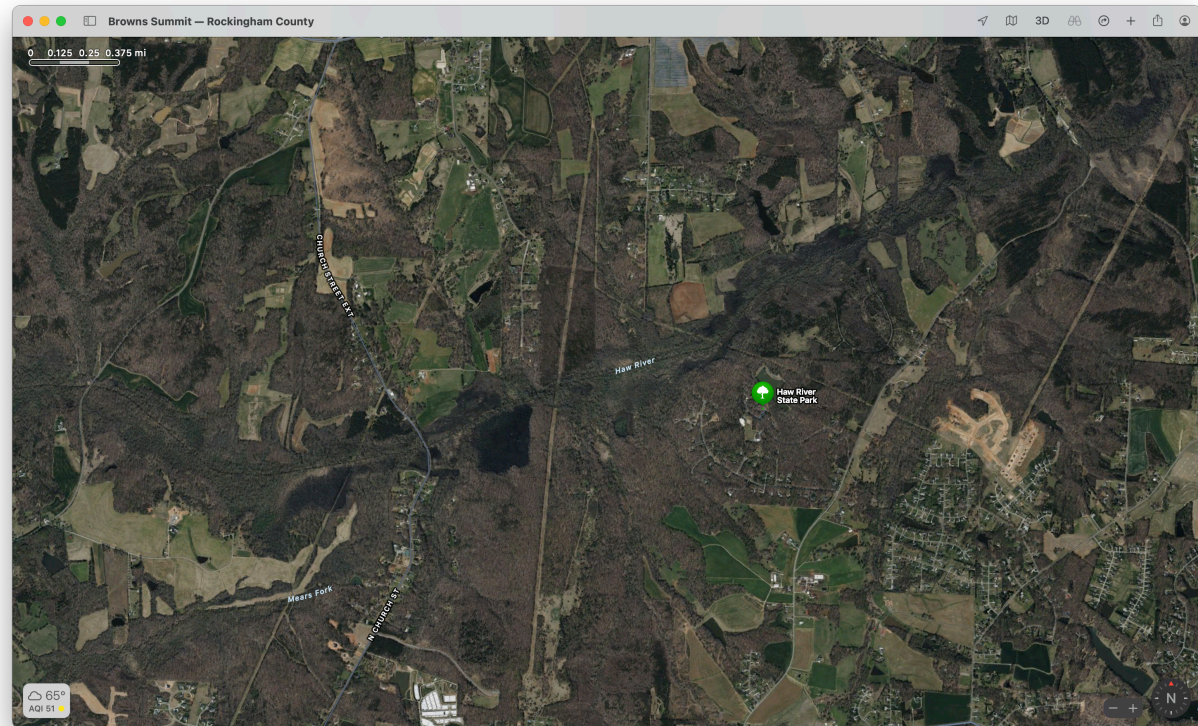




**"These value are important. They are not values that are automatically transferred without study, dialogue and experience. Opportunities to study Quakerism are needed in order to understand this particular heritage. Young people need exposure to Quaker process to understand both the vitality of Friends procedures and the patience required to solve personal and institutional problems through group deliberation. Leaders at all levels of Quaker organization need [[renewal]] in understanding enduring insights with fresh vision."**

**Judith Weller Harvey (1982)**

# Where are we?



# Context is:

**The life stories of the meeting**

**Major cultural systems**

**A personal or community's social location**

**Major cultural changes**

**The natural world as context**

**Micro-local-contexts**







### 3. Who Are We?



**> Tradition is the living faith of the dead, traditionalism is the dead faith of the living. And, I suppose I should add, it is traditionalism that gives tradition such a bad name.”**

**Jaroslav Pelikan**



**> Robert Barclay writes in the Apology about this same idea when thinking about the Bible: “God hath seen meet that herein we should, as in a looking-glass, see the conditions and experience of the saints of old; that finding our experience answer to theirs, we might thereby be the more confirmed and comforted, and our hope of attaining the same end strengthened.”**

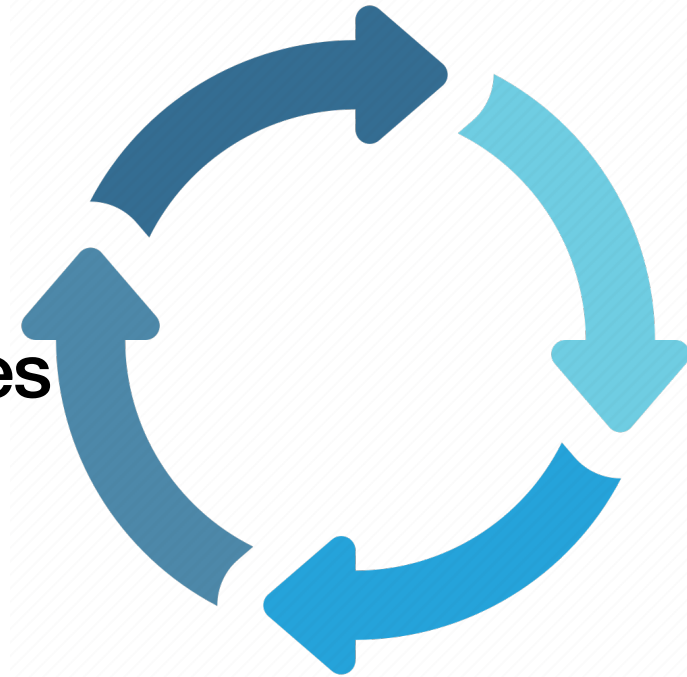
**Robert Barclay**

# **Appreciative Inquiry**

**> Appreciative inquiry (AI) assumes that all organizations have significant life forces, and these forces are available in stories and imaginations. Further, by bringing these resources into the organization's conversations and planning, major changes can be implemented. In other words, by discovering the best and most valuable narratives and qualities of an organization, participants can construct a new way that has the most important links to the past and the most hopeful images of the future. -Mark Lau Branson**

# Appreciative Inquiry Process

- Choose the positive as the focus of inquiry.
- Inquire into stories of life-giving forces through well-crafted questions.
- Locate themes that appear in the stories and select topics for further inquiry.
- Create shared images for a preferred future.
- Find innovative ways to create that future



# Example Questions:

1. Describe a time in your organization/community that you considered a high-point experience, a time when you were most engaged and felt alive and vibrant. (What is)
2. Without being modest, what do you most value about yourself, your work, and your organization/community? (What is)
3. What are the core factors that give life to your organization/community when it is at its best? (What might be)
4. Imagine your organization/community ten years from now, when everything is just as you always wished it could be. What is different? How have you contributed to this “dream organization/community?” (What should be)

**4. Where are we going? Practices that will change us.**



# Practices to Experiment With

Expectant waiting worship (Silence)  
Communal discernment  
Non-violent resistance to the powers that be  
Living lives of plainness  
Eating together  
Translation and interpretation (made possible in intervisitation and consultation)  
Experimentation (with styles of worship, ways of building relationships)  
Singing songs (of resistance) together  
Praying together (joys and concerns)  
Friendship with our surrounding community  
Reading the Bible with Empathy and the Poor (See T. Vail Palmer Jr, Liz Theoharis)



# Practices to Experiment With

- Our concept of “communion” and communing with the marginalized in their ways
- Confession of our complicity in empire
- Creating space for sharing of the ways in which we have been traumatized by empire
- Building friendship across differences
- Practicing humility rather than Quaker exceptionalism
- Deep generosity of space, resources, money, and time to those who lack resources
- Undertaking and participate in healing work for ourselves and others



# Practices to Experiment With

Training members in the way of Friends.

Going deep into the roots of our tradition and its practices and theology of resistance  
Learning and practicing anti-oppression work (racism, transphobia, ableism, etc) from a lens of love and redemption

Making beautiful art and sharing it

Reconnecting with the earth, becoming acquainted with the watershed and foodsheds we live in. Learning the history of the land and the potential traumas it has experienced due to colonialism and imperialism. Make the understanding of community broader to include the more-than-human-world.



# Characteristics of Convergent Renewal

Commits to a "convergent mindset"

Creates what it wants to see in the world

Nurtures apprentices

Fosters a "many voiced" community\*\*

Loves their "place"

Engages in outreach

Experiences renewed spiritual depth

## Next Steps