



**Call for Papers:
Quaker Theological Discussion Group 2023**

December 1–2, 2023

8–10am Pacific/11am–1pm Eastern/4–6pm GMT

The Quaker Theological Discussion Group (QTDG) will hold two virtual panels December 1–2, 2023 on the topic, “**Tradition & Transformation: Quakerism 400 Years after the Birth of George Fox.**” We invite Friends (and anyone with interest) to offer presentations on the topic described below. Panelists will each share for 15 minutes from their experience and/or research, followed by a question and answer session. Panelists may be invited to share their presentations as papers in *Quaker Religious Thought (QRT)*.

To contribute a presentation proposal, please submit your topic and around 250 words describing what you would be sharing about. Please send submissions, via email, to *both* QTDG co-chairs, Cherice Bock (cbock@georgefox.edu) and Christy Randazzo (danchristy.randazzo@gmail.com). Submissions are encouraged on or before **August 1, 2023**.

Tradition & Transformation: Quakerism 400 Years after the Birth of George Fox

The year 2024 marks 400 years since the birth of George Fox, whose words and actions brought together many in seventeenth-century England who were already searching for a deeper and more meaningful spiritual community than they experienced in the Church of England of their day, catalyzing what came to be the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Through recovering what they thought to be the original message of Jesus’ life and ministry, and through emphasizing a direct experience of the Divine, early Friends—as late and radical participants in the Reformation—sought to reclaim what they understood as the core of the Christian tradition, transforming what they viewed as its tired forms and rigid hierarchies.

Our own time appears to be a similar inflection point. Many people are becoming disillusioned with the church, as evidenced by a decline in membership and the closing of many houses of worship, including Friends meetings. At the same time, many congregations are expanding their numbers by espousing ideologies of Christian nationalism, authoritarian leadership styles, discrimination, and xenophobia. A growing number of people are recognizing that current social, political, and economic systems do not work if we would like to continue to inhabit a planet with livable temperatures and climate, but prevailing systems of unlimited growth, human and resource exploitation, and competitive national politics are difficult to redirect.

What can we draw from the Quaker tradition that can help us navigate the twenty-first century and beyond? What transformations does the Friends movement need to make in order to overcome and heal ways in which the denomination has participated in harmful practices and systems? What have Friends learned over the last four centuries that needs to be continued, reignited, or nurtured? In what ways has the movement built up forms that need to be broken down? In what ways have Friends traditions interacted with a variety of cultures that have expanded and transformed what it means to be Quaker in meaningful ways? What are current and future growth areas for Friends?

Consider these queries as you imagine what you might have to contribute to this conversation around tradition and transformation in Quakerism. While papers touching on the legacy of George Fox are welcome, direct engagement with Fox is not necessary. Two panels of 3–4 members each will consider this topic in December 2023, contributing articles to the 2024 issues of *Quaker Religious Thought*.