



Quillen Shinn

CHURCH IS A PLACE WHERE WE LEARN
TOGETHER.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ALPHABET
Please read the Overview before using this Plan.

Q q Letter Q introduces Quillen Shinn, Universalist minister who started churches along the Eastern Seacoast, and Unitarian Universalist camps and conferences.

MATERIALS: Construction paper Letter with hole punched in top, yarn for necklace
If you plan to make a quilt, this will take planning and gathering of sheeting, additional adults, and fabric markers. If it is to be a social action project, additional parts of the church community may be needed.
Visitor to talk about how the church was started.
Snacks—quince

GETTING STARTED:

Welcome. After each person says his or her name, the group responds, “Welcome, (name).” For a child who is attending for the first time this year, add name to the letters that have been posted and to the attendance sheet, and make a nametag during or after the session. Leave an empty chair for someone who is not present or for someone who has not joined the group yet.

The *Letter of the Day*:

- Talk about the Letter.
- Give the Letter Necklace to a person with that initial.
- Talk about the things that the children have brought for the Letter, and or Letter Bag.
- Put the things related to the letter in the Special Place

SPECIAL PERSON: Quillen Shinn (1845-1907)

A little over a hundred years ago, on a summer evening, Quillen Shinn and his son took a walk after dinner. They had heard of land about two miles from where they were staying in Ocean Park, Maine, that sounded like a good place for Universalists to meet during the summer. He had been leading the Universalists in summer meetings since 1882, starting at a Methodist camp at The Weirs in New Hampshire. Now he had been talking

with the Free Will Baptists in Ocean Park about using some of their space, but they really wanted a place of their own where they could talk about what they believed, and where they could have fun in the summer sun and water.

That summer evening Quillen found the land that he was looking for! In 1901, Ferry Beach became the Universalist summer meeting place. People reached Ferry Beach by train. Some people stayed in tents and some stayed in the Ferry Beach House, which is now called "The Quillen." There were lectures and discussions, workshops and games, and beach time with friends, old and new.

Quillen Hamilton Shinn was an Universalist minister in several churches in Vermont, Massachusetts, and Maine. In 1891 he became a missionary traveler, actually elected by the Universalist General Convention in 1895 to be the General Missionary for the denomination. He traveled to many places, usually by riding a horse. He started about 50 churches and Sunday Schools, and also organized the National Young People's Christian Union for the Universalists. He was excited about the message that "God is Love." He also encouraged the churches to be actively involved in social concerns in their local areas.

AFFIRMATION: *Church is the place where we learn together.*

When was your church started? Is there any date in the church, like a corner stone? Possibly invite someone who is familiar with the history to talk with the group.

Questions. One of the most important ways that we learn is by asking questions. Sometimes we do not have the answers, but keep talking together as we try to find the answers. We may have different answers, and we learn from each other.

THE LETTER Q IN THE CHURCH
Quiet. (Noise is under Nightingale.) Sit quietly and listen to everything without moving or

making any noise for a brief time. What was it like to be quiet? What did you hear when you were very quiet? Taking time to be quiet can be part of the group practice as a part of each session or when things get confusing. The length of quiet time will depend on the group.
When are people quiet in church (such as for meditation)?

Quilt/quilting: Talk about quilts as a way of telling stories or making special designs. This project will take more than a session and will require additional adult assistance. Suggestions:

1. Children make their own pictures on squares of white sheeting, or develop designs with the help of older children or adults. These pictures are sewn together against a backing. Draw directly onto the sheet with fabric crayons or on paper that is later transferred to the sheeting with an iron. The drawings can be at the decision of the child or to follow a theme. This type of quilt will probably be used for a hanging or room decoration. Suggestion: sign and date the squares/quilt. The method of quilting can be used on banners and hangings of all sizes. Important components of this activity are working together and being creative.
2. Have children pick out material to make squares for a pattern. These will need to be sewn against a backing. An added importance for the group would be creating a quilt for a special person or project (from AIDS quilts to the Ronald McDonald Houses). This would be an opportunity for social action.

Note: Fabric shops frequently have small pieces (sometimes called scraps or end pieces) that can be used for quilts.

A-B-C

Animals: Quail

Body:

Calendar:

- Note the date of the session and any special events for the day, including birthdays.
- Note items beginning with that letter

- Note events between today and the next session.

CLOSING: Gather around the Special Place where the things related to the letter have been placed. " We give thanks for the Letter Q. We have shared and learned about special people and animals and ourselves and our church. May we leave in love and peace. Next week we will meet again. Our letter will be ____ and our leader(s) will be _____." Make sure that people take home things that need to go.

VARIATIONS FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Camps and conference centers. Have you ever been to a camp, possibly for a day or a conference with your family? Ferry Beach is one of about 20 Unitarian Universalist camps and conference centers. Contact the Council of Unitarian Universalist Camps and Conferences, or see the Unitarian Universalist Association Web Page, Look at what programs are available for religious education and children's programming in a camp near you. Have someone who has been to a conference center talk with the group -- including a youth from the church.

Contact Ferry Beach for history of how Quillen Shinn started summer the conferences before and including Ferry Beach.

<http://www.ferrybeach.org/about/history.html>

© Helen Zidowecki, 10/2007