**Welcome to Summer Gathering, and thank you for being a home group leader!**

The purpose of home groups is for Summer Gatherers to meet each other in small groups. It is mainly about community building which can embody this year’s theme of ‘Aroha Mai Aroha Atu’ – a whakataukī (Maori proverb) which focuses on supportive reciprocal relationships.

Home groups also help prepare Summer Gatherers for Meeting for Worship (which is scheduled immediately after home groups).

In addition, each group is sharing responsibility for an aspect of running Summer Gathering, as well as contributing to the cooking. Again – working together on a shared task can helpfully be framed as contributing to the community that we create and re-create at Summer Gathering.

For those groups that are keen to explore ‘Aroha Mai Aroha Atu’ further, other whakatauki with associated questions, are provided below. However, home groups can decide what they do together. They can also choose where they meet (although the meeting place should not interfere with or disrupt another home group, and,if there is a change to the home group’s meeting place, good communication is needed with all those affected.)

Home group leaders can adapt the group’s activities in response to who is in the home group and what they are experiencing. Consider, for example, home group members’ age, health/energy, familiarity with Summer Gathering and with Quakers/Quakerism. Encouragement to doodle or to make things during home group time can help those people who can focus better when their hands busy. There are resources for making and creating in the craft area. Help yourself to what your group needs. When considering how to adapt what you’re doing in the home group, please be as inclusive as possible.

 A plan for the first home group meeting:

· Introductions – What is your name? Where are you from? What has brought you to Summer Gathering? (Could be a mode of transport; a relationship with someone? Curiosity? An invitation?)

· What are you looking forward to? Is there anything that you’re missing? (Can be interpreted as what has been forgotten (a toothbrush, for example), or who/what has been left behind (my dog, for example).

· Summer Gathering theme – Aroha Mai Aroha Atu. Who knows what it means? Can anyone translate it for us? How can Aroha Mai Aroha Atu be recognised?

· Go through the duty that has been assigned to your home group (see ‘home group instructions’). How are we organising ourselves? Is it clear what we have to do? If not, speak to Emma Smith.

· Does everyone know what is happening today? (Encourage Summer Gatherers to keep checking notices).

· Transition together to Meeting for Worship. It can help the children to be reminded about Meeting for Worship, what we are doing in it and maybe encourage them to take something with them into it – for example a book, a question, a favourite cuddly.

 A plan for subsequent home groups:

· Check in with everyone – how’s going so far? What’s the highlight so far?

· Any burning issues that we need to be helping one another with?

· Engaging with a whakataukī (see below)

· Check re home group’s duties.

· Everyone clear what is happening today?

· Transition into meeting for worship

**Are you ready for reflecting on Aroha Mai, Aroha Atu?**

**Read a Whakataukī and the brief commentary about it. Then encourage a go round of responses to the queries.**

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| **Whakataukī:** Tukua mai he kapunga oneone ki ahau hei tangi māku *Send me a handful of soil so that I may weep over it*Māori have an intimate connection to the land and see us all as kaitiaki (caretakers) of this taonga (gift, treasure). This connection to the whenua provides us with a source of identity, spiritual nourishment and emotional healing. The land absorbs the tears that we may shed and can also provide healing in times of emotional turmoil.**Query:** In what ways in your life have you been true to “aroha mai, aroha atu” with the whenua (land, environment) we all share?” What treasures or gifts have you experienced receiving from the environment? What are some examples of ways in which you have been able or have thought to reciprocate these gifts?  |

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| **Whakataukī:** E koekoe te tūī,e ketekete te kākā, e kūkū te kererū.*By appreciating all our voices, our different songs, we make good music for the future.*This whakataukī speaks of the many different voices of the universe. That no one voice is greater than the other. That we all have a voice worthy of being heard. That only when we truly hear others can we find ourselves.**Query:** In what ways in your life have you been unable or unwilling to honour “aroha mai, aroha atu” with people whose voices trouble you? |

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| **Whakataukī:** Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi. *With your food basket and my food basket the people will thrive.*This whakatauki talks to community, to collaboration and a strengths-based approach. It acknowledges that everybody has something to offer, a piece.**Query:** In what ways have you been true to “aroha mai/aroha atu” while relating to the different communities you are a part of? |

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| **Whakataukī** i: *Me he maonga āwhā* *Like a lull in a storm*This is used to describe a sudden pause in a heated discussion or argument. It tells us that we need to take a moment within times of intense feelings to settle ourselves and to take the time to pause and reflect. The implication is that feelings can be storm-like but there are moments where we can make space for calm.**Query:** In what ways have you personally been unable or unwilling to honour aroha mai/aroha atu during heated discussions or arguments?  |