

# Principles and Practices

Earlham's Principles and Practices are the set of values that guide those of us who live, work, teach and learn in this community. They also provide the foundation for campus policies that apply to all members of the community, as well as our governance structure. Today, Earlham's Principles and Practices include:

## Respect for persons

It is a foundational Quaker belief that all persons have available to them an inner spirit of Truth, often known as the "Inner Light" or "God's Voice Within."

From this belief follows an assumption of equality of all persons and grounds for respecting all persons. We commit ourselves to be a community whose members act with regard for the intellectual, physical and emotional well-being of everyone, while acknowledging that there are systems of oppression that we strive to dismantle that affect our own community. We seek to find mutual respect, trust and happiness in our relationships with persons of every race, ethnicity, class, religious preference, political affiliation, gender identity, physical ability, sexual orientation and age, including persons removed by time and place.

## Integrity

The Quaker testimony of Integrity asks us to aspire to personal wholeness, honesty and truthful living. Integrity means completeness or one-ness and implies a commitment to speaking our truth. Integrity nourishes our trust in one another, allowing us to rely on one another and others to rely on us. It means openly and honestly engaging with each other as well as recognizing and working to change our own biases, both conscious and unconscious.

Academic integrity is particularly important in educational communities. These communities rely on all of members pursuing truth honestly, scrupulously crediting the work of others and taking credit only for one's own work and discoveries.

## Peace and justice

Peace is defined by some as the absence of conflict and oppression. However, for many Quakers, peace is not an instance, it is an existence. Peace is action that works toward harmony, well-being, wholeness, prosperity, health, happiness, fulfillment, security, tranquility and safety for everyone.

The Quaker peace testimony holds that all forms of violence are an injustice that harm all parties involved, and violence does not provide a path to true, just and lasting peace. The peace testimony acknowledges that violence exists not only in personal interactions but also in the oppression and harm caused by unjust, unequal and inequitable institutional and social structures; here, peace is a direct product of justice, which seeks what is right, equitable, and honorable, and peace cannot exist without justice, as without justice, peace is impossible.

Many thoughtful and moral people disagree with the strong form of Quaker pacifism that deplores all forms of violence, but the Quaker peace testimony challenges Earlhamites to not only deplore violence and injustice, but to take action in seeking to resolve, repair, restore, reconcile, reconstruct, relieve, mediate and heal the harm that has been done.

## Simplicity

The Quaker testimony of Simplicity invites us to recognize what is central in our lives by listening to inward leadings and learning from others. That listening can give us clarity as we make choices about the responsible

use of our time and resources. A life guided by the testimony of simplicity can lead us to recognize what brings us joy and to be good stewards of personal, community and global resources. It replaces distraction, stress, and excess with clarity, focus and a sustainable life for all.

Simplicity enables us to discern what is really necessary for the well-being of ourselves, others, and the world.

## Community

Earlham College, founded by the Religious Society of Friends, believes ideals that guide us are best encountered in a community of openness and mutual respect. Educational communities exist as an opportunity to discover and test truth. Because each person brings different knowledge and perspectives, truth-seeking is best fostered within community. As a result, the individual at Earlham has a great many opportunities, rights and responsibilities. As active, engaged members in this community, we come to know our interdependence and connectedness. As such we strive to create, contribute and care for all in our community, intentionally listening for perspectives that may not be present or heard. We aspire toward a commitment to celebrating each other, diversity, equitable opportunities and resources.

Earlham strives towards a community of caring which seeks the intellectual, physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing of its members. Discerning the needs of others is an important dimension of learning. As members of a community, we aspire to consider one another in all our choices, including the use of our words, actions and resources and decision-making process.

In consultation with one another, we have the potential to make better decisions than individuals alone or majorities, which may ignore minority views. Differences can be sources for growth and new insight. Quakers' belief in "the inner spirit of truth" means that all people have the potential to discover truth. Accordingly, we consult broadly, value diverse opinions, and are intentional with a goal toward inclusion of various voices in seeking consensus in decisionmaking.