

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING

GUNPOWDER FRIENDS MEETING NEWS, Web Edition for January, 2021

Caring for one another



QUERIES:

In what ways do I show respect for that of God in every person?
Do I reach out with spiritual and practical care to those with special needs?
Am I comfortable making my own needs known to my Meeting?
How do we share in the diverse joys and transitions in each other's lives?

ADVICES:

Our Meetings are strongest when Friends are concerned about the welfare of every member of the Meeting community. While we need to guard against prying or invasion of privacy, it is nevertheless essential that Meetings be aware of the spiritual and material needs of members of the community and express caring concern in appropriate ways. To this end, we are to live affectionately as friends, entering with sympathy into the joys and sorrows of one another's lives.

As we are willing to offer help, so we need to be willing to make our needs known and to accept help. In bereavement, we need to give ourselves time to grieve. When others mourn, we need to let our love embrace them with the simple things of life: praying together, talking, planning meals, caring for children, and otherwise being of comfort. In offering pastoral care, it is not necessary to find the right words; it is important to be present.

Just as we do not leave pastoral care to a pastor, so we may not leave this most essential function to a committee alone. It is important to recognize when it may be appropriate to reach within or beyond the Quaker community to involve persons with special expertise.

VOICES:

Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness, and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another—and helping one another up with a tender hand, if there has been any slip or fall.
Isaac Pennington, 1667

In a true community we will not choose our companions, for our choices are so often limited by self-serving motives. Instead, our companions will be given to us by grace. Often they will be persons who will upset our settled view of self and world. In fact, we might define true community as the place where the person you least want to live with always lives!

Parker J. Palmer, 1977

How does a man in the dark prison environment follow his leadings, adhere to the foundations of his faith and live in the Light? Queries such as these are what bring men to Quaker worship. Queries such as these provide guides as we seek to find our way. The men at South Mountain Friends Fellowship are grateful for the path that has remained lit for us, and for others to follow.

South Mountain Friends Fellowship, 2006



ANNOUNCEMENTS

GUNPOWDER FRIENDS MEETING



FROM MINISTRY & COUNSEL:

Calendar:

Sunday, January 10th: Worship Sharing on the Spiritual State of the Meeting via Zoom from 11:30am - 12:30pm

Thursday, January 21st: Spiritual Formation Large Group Gathering via Zoom 7:00 - 8:30pm

Sunday, January 24th: Bible Study via Zoom 9:00 - 10:00am

Our **First Month Forum** will focus on the Spiritual State of Gunpowder Friends Meeting. Each year, we are invited by Baltimore Yearly Meeting to reflect and report on the Spiritual State of our Meeting. The Ministry and Pastoral Care Committee of Baltimore Yearly Meeting reads each report carefully to hear how the Spirit is moving within and among our local Meetings. When we gather on January 10th from 11:30 - 12:30, we will follow the practice of Worship Sharing to guide our reflections: we will use the three queries below to guide our reflection and sharing.

- How does Spirit prosper among us? How have we maintained our relationship with Spirit, both within and among us?
- What are Friends doing to support one another? How have we addressed the conflicts that have arisen this year?
- What does spirituality mean to us and our Meeting? Has it changed during 2020 due to the challenges posed by the various global and cultural events this year?

Members of Gunpowder's Ministry and Counsel Committee will transcribe our sharing and use it to prepare a report for both our own community and for Baltimore Yearly Meeting. We welcome all to join in this time of reflection. Friends who cannot join us on that day are welcome to send reflections in writing to the co-clerks of Ministry and Counsel, Rep Pickard (deathquaker@gmail.com) or Amy Schmaljohn (amy@schmaljohn.com). We will also be reaching out through the Working Group for First Day School to hear the thoughts of our younger Friends.



Gunpowder Friends Bible Study is focusing on the Book of Job from the Hebrew Bible for our winter session. Join us as we explore the wisdom of this ancient story of suffering and faithfulness and consider what it reveals to us in our own times. We meet the fourth Sunday of every month via Zoom from 9:00 - 10:00am

From Rep Pickard, on behalf of Ministry & Counsel:

We continue to anchor worship at the meetinghouse with a small group of up to five Friends. To make it easier for all and to ensure these Friends' safety, please sign up, by Friday, to volunteer as an anchor here: <https://forms.gle/kkkF4x2qP7MRMLrt7> There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer in the coming months.

CROP WALK:

During this year's Crop Walk Gunpowder donated \$160. Thanks to everyone who donated to help mitigate the effects of hunger in our community and around the world. *Tina Rives*



RICHARD ROHR:

The Richard Rohr discussion group meets 4th First days at 11:30am through May. No advance preparation is required. We will read a short passage aloud and then settle into a worshipful discussion. A link to the session will be sent closer to the date.

FROM CARE & OVERSIGHT:

Virtual Coffee Hour, Sunday 1/3/21, At Rise of Meeting:

Care and Oversight Committee invites you to stay online at the rise of Meeting on 1/3/21 for some casual social time using the breakout room feature of Zoom (BYO coffee, tea and/or snack!)



Meeting Directory:

In mid-December Care and Oversight Committee internally republished our updated Meeting directory. It is available only by email attachment or in a print copy. If you need a copy, either emailed or printed, please email louannesmith2@gmail.com with your request. We encourage Friends (especially during the dark days of winter!) to use this resource to reach out to one another.

Reminder: One role of C&O is to coordinate community support for those in need. Please let us know if you have needs the Meeting can help with!



GUNPOWDER FRIENDSHIP NIGHTS, WEDNESDAYS, 7-8PM, VIA ZOOM:

Looking for a lighthearted way to stay connected with Gunpowder Friends during this time of physical distancing? **Join us each Wednesday evening from 7-8 via Zoom.** You can drop in for a few minutes or stay the hour. The Clerk will send out a link each week.

WORKING GROUP FOR STEWARDING OUR VISION (WGSV):



The Working Group on Stewarding our Vision is charged with naming and supporting future Meeting aspirations. The next meeting of the WGSV committee will be held on Tuesday, January 12, 2021, via Zoom, 4:30-6:00pm. We will continue to plan our next steps in the process of discerning our way forward. Friends are most welcome to join us. If you plan to attend please contact Greta Kirk-Mickey at greta.mickey@gmail.com or Anita Langford at amlangfo@verizon.net.

The Working Group on Stewarding our Vision First Month 2021 Newsletter Article The McKim Center Working Group Forms

During the past year the Working Group on Stewarding our Vision (WGSV) has focused on our Mission Vision and Values Statement (approved and affirmed First month 2020). As we reflected upon the Values portion of that statement, The WGSV committee was led to bring forward a series of gatherings to help us to rest in the Spirit as we discerned the possibilities for our work in the world.

The second gathering on October 17th, **Discerning Our Way Forward**, was deeply Spirit led. Friends present shared leadings that had risen after they had held a series of queries which were designed to help open way. While many leadings rose, strong unity and excitement was felt around a leading to work with the McKim Community Center. Friends echoed this throughout our time together. Some shared that the McKim Center had risen as a leading for them as well. Friends clearly echoed their sense that this one leading encompassed many of the leadings that were lifted up. It weaves into a rich tapestry the work for racial equality, lifting up the BYM camps and the STRIDE program, the possibility of making our meeting house and lands available as a place of respite and spiritual growth, and to help others to experience the natural world.

Friends shared their understanding that if we were to step into this work it would be the work of accompaniment. It would entail a journey of mutual learning and of deepening relationships with the McKim Community Center so that together, we might grow in love, understanding, and service to one another.

Friends gathered heard the following proposed minute which was subsequently approved to be brought to Twelfth month meeting for worship with a concern for business. That minute is as follows:

“The Working Group on Stewarding our Vision recommends that at Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business in Twelfth month 2020 a request be made that

the McKim Center Working Group be formed. Membership will be voluntary with at least one member of the Working Group on Stewarding our Vision (WGSV) in membership as liaison. The McKim Center Working Group will work in concert with the WGSV to create the charge for its work and will bring the charge forward for approval at first month 2021 Meeting for Business. The McKim Center Working Group will then make connections with the McKim Center and return to the Meeting with recommendations to move our work forward.”

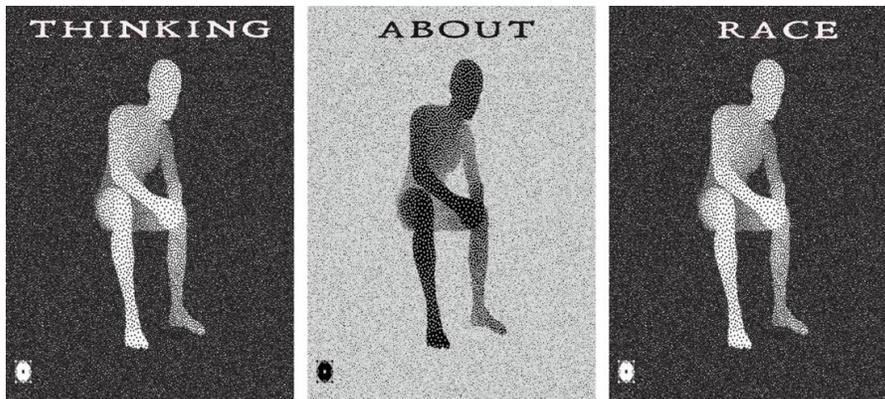
This minute was approved at meeting for worship with a concern for business 20 Twelfth month, 2020. The minute opens way for the beginning of a relationship between Gunpowder Friends Meeting and the McKim Community Center in hopes of learning from one another as we grow in service, love, and understanding.

Volunteers led to serve on this new Working Group should contact Anita Langford (amlangfo@verizon.net) or Greta Kirk-Mickey (greta.mickey@gmail.com). Members of the Working Group on Stewarding our Vision who have already volunteered to serve on the McKim Center Working Group are Alan Evans, Amy Schmaljohn, and Greta Kirk-Mickey.

The long and winding road that brought Gunpowder Friends to this point has been deeply worshipful and steeped in Spirit. We continue to hold this nascent journey in the Light with the certain faith that when we take the time to listen for the leadings of the Spirit, Spirit will, indeed, be our Guide.



From Anna Brown: For a message from FCNL,, go to :
<https://fcnl.actionkit.com/mailings/view/15212?t=4&akid=15212%2E1050%2EpIYfIM>



A Justice Testimony

In his recent Pendle Hill Pamphlet (#465), **Race, Systemic Violence, and Retrospective Justice: An African-American Quaker Scholar-Activist Challenges Conventional Narratives**, Harold D. Weaver, Jr., makes the case for “a more robust, active justice testimony.” Starting in 2008, through

his ministry, the BlackQuaker Project, an Ad Hoc Working Group within New England Yearly Meeting took up this concern. They formulated these queries, which appear in the pamphlet (pp. 29-30):

- Do we need a Justice testimony in the Religious Society of Friends? Why and how might a Justice testimony help Friends in our spiritual and temporal practices?
- What does “justice” mean to Friends? How does our meeting respond to the need for justice?
- If we disregard justice, what impact does it have on our spiritual lives and on our connection with the Divine?
- What is the relationship between love and justice? Between living in the Spirit and seeking justice? If compassion is love in action, what is justice in action?
- How does oppression dehumanize and dim the Light, both in oppressor and oppressed?

This column is prepared by the BYM Working Group on Racism (WGR) and sent to the designated liaison at each local Meeting. The BYM WGR meets most months on the first Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, currently via Zoom. If you would like to attend, contact clerk David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net.

WORSHIPFUL CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

Next gathering, **Thursday January 7, 7:00pm**

These conversations, offered under the care of the Ministry and Counsel committee, intend to offer a space for sharing concerns and experiences on the subject of race and racial justice. These are meant to be spacious, spiritually grounded conversations held in the Light of Spirit and in hope of insight. We intend to listen deeply and share honestly rather than find solutions or fix problems.

Topic/Query for January’s conversation:

What have you been reading or listening to on the subject of race and justice? Can you share a bit about an insight you have had, some history you have learned, and/or writers you have discovered?

GETTING THE LINK: If you have participated previously, you will receive the zoom link. If you have not, but want to join in, please email Anita Langford at amlangfo@verizon.net.

The Planning Committee: Anita Langford, Helen Berkeley, Bob Fetter, Rebecca Richards



Heartworks Wellness

for Inspired Living

Maintaining Resilience in Trying Times

Uncertainty is epidemic in today's world and it is affecting every phase of our lives. Social and personal connections remain challenging and our daily routines and rituals have been disrupted. This type of chronic stress can alter our health and well-being in a negative way. Mutual support is essential in the time of COVID19.

As a Certified Integrative Health Coach who has benefited immensely from the integrative health community, I want to pay it forward. I am offering to facilitate on-line Support Groups for the Community of Friends. Support groups can be highly beneficial. When you work with one individual, you examine situations from one perspective – yours. But when you work in a group, you are exposed to a variety of insights that empower you to see a situation from multiple angles and motivate you to develop new solutions. It is like discovering a precious nugget of advice from a very honest friend that you could not see on your own.

I envision two groups – one Monday evening and one Thursday morning on alternating weeks beginning sometime in January 2021. The groups will be small, consisting of from 4-10 participants and will meet twice a month for 60-90 minutes depending on group size. Each group is a personal support system and the agenda for a group will be cocreated with the group members. Every group will be different.

Depending on the needs of each group, it could include stress management tips and techniques, nutrition and/or lifestyle coaching and emotional and spiritual support. The groups will meet twice a month. We will begin and end with quiet time. We will listen to one another as we do in Worship Sharing. I provide an atmosphere in which all communications are confidential. Initially, I will provide a group meeting that will be informational to assist you in determining if this group is right for you. Each group's primary focus will be support and encouragement for healing in mind, body and spirit individually and collectively. With other Friends you will join a close-knit group that is energizing, motivating and healing.

If you are interested in being part of one of these groups, contact me, Joan Gugerty, directly at joangugerty@gmail.com.

Joan Gugerty, CIHC

www.heartworkswellness.com

The Web Edition of the Newsletter does not include minutes from Gunpowder's Meeting for Business. Personal Information has been redacted. The full newsletter, complete with minutes, is available at the Meetinghouse – attenders may also request the electronic or print edition.

Please feel free to inquire with Gunpowder's Clerk at gunpowderclerk@gmail.com.