

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING

GUNPOWDER FRIENDS MEETING NEWS, Web Edition for December, 2022

MEETING FOR WORSHIP



QUERIES:

- How does worship deepen my relationship with the Divine? How is this inspiration carried over into my daily life?
- How does our worship inspire our Meeting's activities?

ADVICES:

The heart of the Religious Society of Friends is the Meeting for Worship. In worship we are called to seek God's will with our entire being: body, mind, and soul. Worship is the adoring response of the heart and mind to the influences of the Spirit of God. It stands neither in forms nor in the formal disuse of forms. "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24 NRSV.)

During the Meeting for Worship, Friends may be led by the Spirit to testify, to share an insight, to pray, to praise. When speaking, we should do so clearly and simply, using as many words as necessary and as few as possible. When another speaks, listen with an open spirit, holding the speaker in love. Rest with the message, recognizing that even if it is not God's word for you, it may be so for others.

VOICES:

Friends, meet together and know one another in that which is eternal, which was before the world was.

George Fox, 1657

I have never lost the joy of sitting in silence at the beginning of Meeting, knowing that everything can happen, knowing the joy of the utmost surprise; feeling that nothing is preordained, nothing is set, all is open. The Light can come from all sides. The joy of experiencing the Light in a completely different way than one has thought it would come is one of the greatest gifts that Friends' Meeting for Worship has brought me.

Ursula M. Franklin, 1979

Finally, remember that our manner of worship is ultimately a mystery under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Each Meeting for Worship is a spiritual adventure, unique and unpredictable. Let us remember in humility that "the end of words is to bring us to the knowledge of things beyond what words can utter."

Isaac Pennington, 1670

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Clerk's Announcement:

If you would like an email or a notice to go out to members and attenders of the Meeting, please send your request to GunpowderClerk@gmail.com.

December's Forum: A Musical Christmas

Sharing our musical gifts, we will celebrate the Spirit of Christmas the Sunday before Christmas, December 18, 11:30 to whenever. Various Friends are preparing, the piano will be in proximity to the Meeting Room and the general merriment will be enhanced by Christmas yummys.

Bring a plate of cookies and your holiday hat. Wear your "ugly" sweater if you like. HO HO HO!!!

North County Food Bank

The "Butter Drive" was a resounding success. Twenty-five pounds of butter were delivered in time for distribution in Thanksgiving baskets and Friends contributed so generously that, in addition to another 25 pounds for the Christmas baskets, we will be making a cash donation to the food bank.

Our commitment to **Christmas gifting** this year will support a small family. We will be purchasing and wrapping gifts for a mother and two teen aged daughters. The Snyder family will be coordinating the wish list for the teens. Amy Rakusin and Rebecca Richards will coordinate other family gifts. Look for sign-up sheets in the Meeting House soon. All gifts will need to be wrapped (labeled) and at the Meeting House by December 11th.

DRUM CIRCLE:

Please feel free to join us any/every 1st Saturday each month, from 3:00-4:30 PM. (note new time) No RSVP required, however if you'd like to borrow a drum (and there are plenty available, don't be shy!) please RSVP to Julie Evonna at Julieevonna@gmail.com.

We will drum indoors or outdoors depending upon weather. Masks are optional

We extend an invitation to folks from the wider community that may like to join with us, too -- there is no need to be a Gunpowder attender. No experience required; all levels of drumming experience are welcomed. We drum for fun!

WGSV Committee Meeting Announcement

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 Wednesday, December 14, 2022, from 7:00 to 8:00pm via Zoom. We will continue discernment around the monthly meeting's request for the WGSV to create a process for addressing the need for sound long term financial planning.

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

Opportunity for Connecting!

With the directory coming out soon and it being close to the holidays, what better time is there to reach out and touch someone? We urge friends to pick one Friend in the directory who you haven't spoken to in a while -- or maybe never! -- and drop them a line. Brighten someone's day and build bridges across our community.

The Ad Hoc Inreach Committee of M&C and C&O

From LouAnne Smith (Care and Oversight Committee) and Meredith van den Beemt (Meeting Recorder):

Care and Oversight is preparing to republish (internally) our Meeting Directory in December.

If you have any updates or corrections to your entry since December 2022

OR

if you are new to our community and would like to be listed in our directory, email louannesmith2@gmail.com by 12-5-2022. Please provide your email address, postal address and phone number(s).

If you have been listed previously in the directory and you wish to opt out, email louannesmith2@gmail.com or call 443-595-8292 with your request by 12-5-2022. We will keep your contact information in our database, but we won't publish it in the directory.

The updated directory will be emailed to Gunpowder Friends, and at that time you will have the option to request a paper copy. Please note that the directory is **not** posted on our website and is not

searchable on the internet. The directory is for the use of Meeting members and attenders for Meeting business only (and Meeting business includes reaching out to one another in Gunpowder's beloved community).

Thank you for your help as we strive to provide accurate and up-to-date information in our directory.

Sharing of World Resources: Collecting Stamps for Quaker Good Works:

It's the time of year when we receive lots of "real" mail -- in envelopes with postage stamps! Please save used postage stamps and put them in the collection box at the Meeting House. Leave an ample margin around the stamp. Since 1966 this Stamp Project has collected and sold used postage stamps, the proceeds going to Quaker organizations like RSWR. Thank you for your support – and your stamps! Questions? See LouAnne Smith.

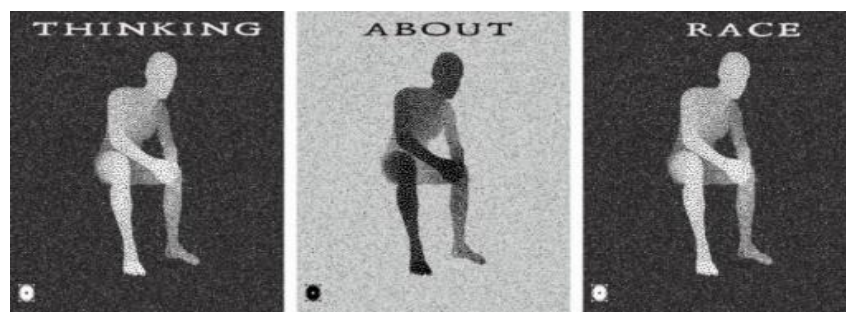
Announcement from BYM Working Group on Racism

The BYM Working Group on Racism is sending this reminder from the BYM weekly announcements inviting Friends to attend a Called Interim Meeting at Stony Run Friends Meeting and via Zoom on **December 3, 12 noon to 4 pm** , *Rising From the Ashes: A BYM Programmed Meeting Toward Connection and Repair of the Harms of Racism*.

"Friends will gather on December 3rd to acknowledge and honor the pain of racism experienced by Friends of Color within our Yearly Meeting, to help White Friends see their complicity in that pain, and to take the next steps on the road to repair of our beloved community. The Meeting is for all Quakers who have the courage to face their complicity in the white dominated system of racism. Together we will be uncomfortable and afraid and have the courage to move forward anyway for the sake of humanity and for love of God's world. The programmed agenda will include silent and spoken worship, music, movement and body practices, deep listening, and the sharing of Testimonies of Complicity. We expect to end on a gathered commitment to next bold steps in living into being an anti-racist faith community."

Registration is required for both in-person and Zoom participation. Register here: <https://www.bym-rsf.org/events/special-events/rising-from-the-ashes.html>

Elizabeth DuVerlie, For the BYM Working Group on Racism



Thinking About Race (December 2022) – “Brown Girl, Brownstones”

A passage from “**Brown Girl, Brownstones**,” a novel by Paule Marshall, 1959. The character Clive, aspiring painter, boyfriend of the protagonist, Selina, says this after Selina tells him about a crushing, racist encounter she has had.

“ Maybe our dark faces remind them of all that is dark and unknown and terrifying within themselves and, as Jimmy Baldwin says, they’re seeking absolution through poor us, either in their beneficence or in their cruelty. I don’t know But I’m afraid we have to disappoint them by confronting them always with the full and awesome weight of our humanity, until they begin to see us and not some unreal image they’ve super-imposed This is the unpleasant and perhaps impossible job, and this is where I bow out, leaving the field to you, my dear sweet odd puritan Selina” -- and he prodded her playfully – “and to the more robust among us. Me, I can’t be so bothered. To hell with them. I’m assured of my humanity lying here in this goddamn room each day seeing things in my mind that I can’t get down right on canvas.

NOTE: Since many of you will receive this column prior to Thanksgiving, the BYM Working Group on Racism reminds you to read and enjoy the full “Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address” introduced in the November column:

https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01_02_Thanksgiving_Address.pdf

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, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, currently via Zoom. If you would like to attend, contact the clerk at david.etheridge@verizon.net.

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.