



Welcome to the **September 2023 Web Edition** of the Gunpowder Newsletter. Some information has been redacted. To receive the full monthly Newsletter please feel free to inquire with Gunpowder's Clerk at gunpowderclerk@gmail.com.

Members and attenders may access newsletters and monthly minutes in the log in area of the website.

SIMPLICITY

QUERIES:



- Am I aware that the ways in which I choose to use my time, my possessions, my money, and my energy reflect my most deeply held values?
- How do we support one another in our search for a simpler life?
- What am I ready to release so that I can give my attention to what matters most?
- What in my present life most distracts me from God?

ADVICES:

Simplicity flows from well-ordered living. It is less a matter of doing without, than a spiritual quality that simplifies our lives by putting first things first. A simple way of life, freely chosen, is a source of strength, joy, and comfort. Friends are advised to strive for simplicity in the use of our earnings and property, and in our style of living, choosing that which is simple and useful. This does not mean that life is to be poor and bare, destitute of joy and beauty. Each must determine, by the Light that is given, what promotes and what hinders the compelling search for inner peace that enables us to listen deeply to God.

The testimony of simplicity is like a bell that calls us to an awareness of the Center. It challenges us to ask "What matters?" It reminds us that much of what worries us and stress-es us is not important. It asks us to recognize the burdens we carry needlessly and to lay them down: our anxiety about our appearance, our struggle to afford what we do not need, comparisons between our lifestyle and the lifestyles of others, squabbles born of tension and stress, worries that leave us exhausted and unable to find time for what matters in our lives.

VOICES:

The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak.

-Hans Hoffmann, 1952

I wish I might emphasize how a life becomes simplified when dominated by faith-fulness to a few concerns. Too many of us have too many irons in the fire. We get distracted by the intellectual claim to our interest in a thousand and one good things, and before we know it we are pulled and hauled breathlessly along by an over-burdened program of good committees and good undertakings.... [W]e learn to say No as well as Yes by attending to the guidance of inner

responsibility. Quaker simplicity needs to be expressed not merely in dress and architecture and the height of tombstones but also in the structure of a relatively simplified and coordinated life-program of social responsibilities.

-Thomas R. Kelly, 1941

There is enough for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed.

-Mohandas Gandhi, 1942

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*.

FROM MINISTRY and COUNSEL:

Interested in joining Spiritual Formation this year?

On Thursday, September 21st we'll gather at the Meeting House to resume our shared journey in Spiritual Formation. If you've never participated in Spiritual Formation, many of us can share our experiences of our monthly gatherings in "Large Group," an evening at the Meeting House when we share a meal and reflections on a brief reading. We're also each invited to join a small Spiritual Friendship group that meets at another time (chosen by the group members) to share our spiritual lives and journeys in a more intimate setting. In the Spring, we are invited to a weekend-long retreat with Friends from across Baltimore Yearly Meeting, thereby widening our circle of fellowship. Friends Virginia Schurman and Marshall Sutton brought Spiritual Formation to Gunpowder 22 years ago and we've continued faithfully since then, recognizing the many gifts of Spiritual nurture, friendship, and fellowship it offers us in community. If you're interested in participating this year, or want to learn more, contact Rebecca Richards (*rebecca.richards4912@gmail.com*) or Amy Schmaljohn (*amy@schmaljohn.com*).

Calling all Friends -- A Request for your favorite quotes from the 'One Book'

Healing Resistance, by Hazu Kaga, our Meeting's one book will be the focus of the Forum in October and we are seeking your help.

We want to know what you love and what has moved you in reading this book -- and ask you to submit your favorite bits to be used in the Forum.

We are looking for fairly short quotes (cite page and paragraph). You may share a comment about your choice, though comments will not be used in the Forum.

We need these by September 24, please send to Anita Langford at *amlangfo@verizon.net* or Rebecca Richards at *rebecca.richards4912@gmail.com*.

From the Racial Justice planning group: Anita Langford, Jo Brown, Helen Berkeley, Bob Fetter, and Rebecca Richards

Marriage of Jennifer Robinson and Ed Wilson under the care of Gunpowder Friends Meeting

The marriage of Ed Wilson and Jennifer Robinson will take place on **Saturday, October 7th at Noon** at Gunpowder Meeting House. Friends are welcome to attend and encouraged to participate, as the Monthly Meeting's love, support and act of witness are an integral part of Quaker

Marriage. After the Meeting for Marriage, all who are present are asked to sign the wedding certificate in witness. We are invited to share in the joy of this special day! Afterward, there will be a reception at the Meeting House with lunch provided by Sarah Sherman. (Friends may know Sarah, as she has provided delicious food for recent retreats held at Gunpowder). No gifts please, but if you are so moved, you can make an extra donation to the Meeting.

September 17th Forum

We welcome back our after-Meeting forums with an exciting and informative forum from the McKim Center Free School and Baltimore Wisdom Project. The forum will be facilitated by miss tree and Coach Garfield who will share with us about the programs that they have carefully crafted to uphold McKim's foundational pillars of **structure, discipline, love, and respect**. **We'll also learn about** the peace building programs they have implemented for the youth and elders of the community. Please do plan to be there!



Thinking About Race – (September 2023)

From this year's "one book," **Healing Resistance: A Radically Different Response to Harm**, Kazu Haga

I have known too many people who have been traumatized in one way or another in social justice spaces. From large organizations like Amnesty International to the smallest, most grassroots groups, people are getting harmed by a "woke" activist culture that has become toxic. We can bring down the entire system and have a worldwide revolution, but if we haven't healed our traumas and learned how to be in authentic relationship with each other, we will corrupt any new system we put in its place.

On the other side, there are many communities of healers, meditators, and community builders who are doing the vital work of healing trauma, bringing us back to the present moment, building and restoring trust between people, and cultivating love for all of humankind. Yet, we've seen too often, those communities are disconnected or not in solidarity with people who are risking it all to fight for justice. We can heal every person's trauma, but if we haven't begun to dismantle the structures still in place that perpetuate injustice at the systemic level, we'll replicate the conditions for new traumas to constantly be created.

I have a deep yearning to be in a community that is engaged on both fronts. A community committed to personal transformation as well as social and structural change.