



Welcome to the **January 2024 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.

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.

"Lifting Up Another Way"

At the Business Meeting on Sunday, December 10th we heard a new and exciting perspective – another way of seeing and understanding the different ways our community experiences worship. There are copies of "Lifting Up Another Way" available in the Meeting House and Clerk will send it out in the Clerk's email.

Clerk encouraged Friends to read it and "hold it in your hearts." We expect to return to it in the near future.

January Forum – January 21

Ministry and Counsel is still working on plans for the January Forum, but a fairly clear intention is to use this time to direct our attention toward the hopeful work of another way of looking at and finding our way to a new kind of worship format. Holding the insights from "Lifting Up Another Way" we would engage our creativity to lift up features of worship to meet the differing needs of our community.

Monthly Drum Circle

Please feel free to join us this 1st Saturday, from 3:00-4:30 PM. No RSVP required, however if you'd like to borrow a drum (and there are plenty available, don't be shy!) please RSVP to Jennifer Robinson (jlerobinson@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!

Right 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 supporting RSWR. Current RSWR programs provide microloans in support of women in their microbusiness ventures in Guatemala, India, Kenya and Sierra Leone. Thank you for your support -- and your stamps!

Questions? See LouAnne Smith.

Come Sing-In the New Year led by Ruth Fitz Monday, January 1st 2024 at the Meeting House

The Bridge will be open throughout (muted during singing portions of the day)

Starting at 9:30 with coffee and bagels

10:00 to 11:30 Singing led by Ruth Fitz

11:30 to 1:00 Pot Luck lunch

1:00 to 3:00 More singing with Ruth

Please bring a dish to share for lunch -- true pot luck, no sign-ups. Ruth usually provides an assortment of percussion instruments to use on some pieces. If you have something you'd like to bring, you might check-in with her.

Due to concerns about the increased spread of Covid and flu we are not issuing an invitation to Friends in other Meetings. Friends are also free to mask as they can, but this will not be required.

An Easy Way to Make Your Regular Financial Contributions to Gunpowder!

We'd like to invite you to consider making your contributions to Gunpowder Friends Meeting using our time-tested electronic service "Vanco." Receiving donations via Vanco helps the Finance Committee and the Meeting Treasurer to predict the Meeting's cash flow and eases the work of our Treasurer in receiving your financial support. You can make a regular monthly donation in any amount--and every contribution helps us to meet our shared goal of financial sustainability. In the coming months, we'll discern together as a Meeting Community what this sustainability looks like now and into the future. But now, consider whether you're able to start using Vanco as a way to make your contributions. Enrolling is easy: ask our Treasurer, Joan Sexton, for a copy of the form and return it to her (noah331@hotmail.com).

Of course, if you prefer to contribute via periodic or annual checks made payable to Gunpowder Friends Meeting, that's fine too (just mail them to Gunpowder at P.O. Box 737, Sparks, MD 21152 or drop them in the donation box in the Meeting House). For more information about Vanco, contact the Finance Committee clerk Darren Lacey (dlacey88@gmail.com).

Poem by a Friend

Release

For two hours
on waking,
I churned over the morning's reads
my head turned heedless away from light, air
It was as though the crow's counting was mine, so preoccupied with occupation, he could not see the
day

I teased him, calling back,
and rose at last,
the outed tide, flat, and gray, silent, still
grieving for my distant city of unrelenting hope.

So what a comfort to find you, tiny, golden-eyed lacewing,
entirely green,
furious against the kitchen window screen to outside
when,

after one failed attempt,

you let me curl this page just enough to lift you from the eave as on a great white sail (inscribed with
kind notes in an old hand)
and sail you across the room through the sky-blue porch and out the screen door,
once having pried its rusty hook free

and the hawk,
surprised,
missed his mark

—Jo Brown, "Release" (©2018)



Thinking about Race – (January 2024)

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

"In the same way that physics is the science of the laws that govern the universe, from the quantum to the cosmic levels, I see nonviolence as the science of the universal laws that govern conflict, harm and healing from the personal to the global levels. Nonviolence isn't a naïve, dogmatic or judgmental belief that hatred and violence are bad or that love and compassion are good. Violence and compassion simply exist. Nonviolence is an exploration of the impact of violence and compassion on the human experience and an attempt to understand the laws that govern them." (pp162-163)

Quotes from Christopher Sammond's "Quotes likely to be used in this workshop".

We hope you enjoy these excerpts from our retreat with Christopher. If you'd like the full document there are copies in the Meeting house or you can contact Greta Kirk Mickey (greta.mickey@gmail.com) for the full digital file.

To 'listen' another's soul into a condition of disclosure and discovery may be almost the greatest service that any human being ever performs for another. Douglas Steere

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul
lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk
about.

Ideas, language, even the phrase "each other"
doesn't make any sense.

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.

Don't go back to sleep.

You must ask for what you really want.

Don't go back to sleep.

People are going back and forth across the doorsill
where the two worlds touch.

The door is round and open.

Don't go back to sleep."

Rumi

Avowal

As swimmers dare
to lie face to the sky
and water bears them,
as hawks rest upon air
and air sustains them,
so would I learn to attain
freefall, and float
into Creator Spirit's deep embrace,
knowing no effort earns
that all-surrounding grace. ~ Denise Levertov

Remembrance of God is not a mental concept; it exists deeply embodied as a vibration, a homing frequency to which we can become increasingly sensitively attuned. Cynthia Bourgeault

We do not know how far our own margins of being reach. We cannot completely map the full area that properly belongs to us. No one can with certainty draw the boundary between himself and the beyond himself, any more than we can tell where the tidal river ends and the ocean begins, but we unmistakably feel on occasions that tides from beyond our own margins sweep into us and refresh us.

Rufus Jones

It is almost axiomatic that once we become serious about the spiritual journey, about seeking God, we discover, sooner or later, that the once-a-week worship hour on Sunday is not enough to feed us, and so we discover the importance of the Door Before... It is no accident that daily "retirement" (a time of reading the Bible and inspirational writings, personal prayer, reflection and worship) has been frequently recommended throughout Quaker history... A person who has already experienced times of spiritual nourishment during the week will require less time to let go of the rhythms and preoccupations of normal life and can therefore enter more quickly and easily into full attention to the living Presence... people who have gone through the Door Before, week after week, find it easier to stay in touch with the living Source which can renew and guide them, even in the midst of distractions.

Bill Taber

