



Gunpowder Friends Meeting

Welcome to the **May 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](mailto: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](mailto:GunpowderClerk@gmail.com).

### **Roanoke Meeting to Host Memorial for Bob Fetter**

Roanoke Friends Meeting will have a memorial worship for Bob Fetter on Saturday, May 11, 11:00 a.m., hybrid. Roanoke Friends Meeting is located at Roanoke Meeting is at [505 Day Ave, Roanoke, VA](#). To join by Zoom, contact Tony Martin at [anthonymartin@yahoo.com](mailto:anthonymartin@yahoo.com) for the link.

### **Please join with us for SECOND SUNDAY SINGS!!!**

We are excited and delighted to invite you all to **Second Sunday Sings** beginning May 12, 2024, 9:00am to 9:45am in our Meeting Room. Singing will be led by Ruth Fitz who carries a letter of embracement from York Monthly Meeting for her ministry of singing. Many of us have experienced Ruth's ability to lift us out of ourselves in ways that we hadn't anticipated and into beloved community as she teaches, uplifts, encourages, enlivens and enlightens. Whether you consider yourself a singer, or not, doesn't matter! Spirit is in the room! Clearly a time not to be missed! Mark your calendar for every Second Sunday from 9:00am to 9:45am.

### **WEEKEND SILENT RETREAT: June 21-23**

Twice a year, Baltimore Yearly Meeting offers a silent retreat at Dayspring Retreat Center. It's is a lovely quite place to sink deeply into the silence for restorative practice, walking in nature, reading poetry...or catching up on sleep!!

From Friday dinner to Sunday lunch you are nurtured among Friends, in beauty and really good vegetarian food all for \$250. (Our Meeting can offer support with Spiritual Nurture funds, too.) Express interest or register by contacting the coordinator, Jean Christianson at 410-908-1912 or [jschristianson@gmail.com](mailto:jschristianson@gmail.com)

### **Fine Weather Invites WORSHIP ON THE PORCH**

For many years, worship on the porch in fine weather was a Gunpowder tradition. This is still a welcome practice -- at any time of the year -- but particularly joyful perhaps when the sun shines and breezes waft.

A difference now is that some Friends will continue to stay in the worship room to share time with those who join us across the technology bridge.

The choice is yours. We hope that all who come to worship will gather at 10:55 in the worship room so all may hear the sharing of joys and sorrows.

**FORUMS: YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED...** A little more information on upcoming Forum topics

### **May 19<sup>th</sup> – Vocal Ministry**

When Friends rise in Meeting for Worship to speak it is called “Vocal Ministry.” This kind of speaking rises out of a deep listening to the inner voice of the Spirit, generally considered to be more than a simple sharing of what’s on a speaker’s mind. There is a long history among Friends about the ways in which such speaking is “seasoned,” what a “leading” to speak means.

At this forum in May members of Ministry and Counsel will share resources from Quaker lights such as Bill Taber and Howard Brinton with the hope of sharing experiences of these leadings and how Friends know the seasoning of the Spirit.

### **June 16<sup>th</sup> – How We Grieve**

This forum will be led by Amy Rakusin, a therapist working for years in trauma recovery, and Rebecca Richards who worked many years in hospice chaplaincy. While loss and grief are common experiences of life, the notions we have around how to grieve are not always the best.

Indeed, the idea that “time heals all wounds” is not helpful. Time itself just incrusts most wounds with painful scar tissue. It’s what we do with the time that matters. Learning to bathe a wound with light and massage it to a point of flexibility and strength is spiritual work.

The journey to work with and through grief, in all of it’s many faces, is an invitation to go to the center of our being and find there the heart of compassion. Or as Henri Nouwen wrote, “in the center of our sadness, we find the first signs of God’s presence.” Often, we also find the capacity to forgive ourselves and others. We find Grace.

### **July 21<sup>st</sup> – The Conversation Project, Planning for Death While Living Your Values.**

Planning for Death? Far from a dreary or maudlin exercise, it is very freeing to have clarity and make some wishes known while we still can. And it takes responsibility instead of pushing decision making into the hands of others, who might not want that burden or even know what we want.

“The Conversation Project” has produced a simple booklet to stimulate thinking and conversations for ourselves and family members to be clear about many things from practical matters to medical care decisions. We will use this tool to begin this work.

Later this Fall we plan another forum on the broader subject of “Death and Dying” using a more spiritual perspective that invites wholeness with the reality of our mortality.

### **QUIET DAY @ Gunpowder Meeting: Second Saturday**

After a Silent Retreat Day at Gunpowder Meeting, here’s what some Friends have said:

*“It’s wonderful to have this space and time.”*

*“I feel a spaciousness here.”*

*“I think in a different way when I’m here.”*

*“My approach to whatever I’m doing is more spacious.”*  
*“The deep shared silence is beautiful.”*  
*“I don’t want to leave!”*

Curious? Want to experience some of this? Come join us!

**When:** Second Saturday of each month (with occasional date changes) 9 am until 3 pm

**Who:** All are welcome

**Where:** Gunpowder Friends Meeting House

**Contact:** LouAnne Smith [louannesmith2@gmail.com](mailto:louannesmith2@gmail.com) to learn more or confirm attendance

The Meeting website provides detailed information about how the day goes:

<https://gunpowderfriends.org/spiritual-deepening/silent-retreat-days/>

### **May 11, 3-6 PM: Community Work and Maintenance Day at the Meetinghouse**

Friends are invited to celebrate community, help sustain our Meetinghouse and grounds, and spare unnecessary strain on annual budget by participating in the second of this Spring’s workdays on the grounds, building exterior, and building interior. Because May 11 is a monthly Quiet Day, we will delay start and minimize noise until mid-afternoon when Friends are done with their retreat day; some tasks may need to be postponed, depending upon weather and how things proceed. For the physically adventurous, there will be opportunity to scale the roof, maintain gutters, and explore the Meeting Room attic space (doing or anticipating some preventive maintenance). For Friends who remain grounded, it is an opportunity to make short work of cleaning and sealing outdoor wood benches, and deep-cleaning rooms (FDS and west) not well tended before the Fetter memorial. There’s even a bit of carpentry needed in the area of the water pressure tank. Come if you can and are physically able, and rest easy if you cannot; we’ll be offering such opportunities at least twice a year as seasonal work requires, and some special projects may ultimately require their own smaller workdays. On behalf of Property Committee: Tina Beneman, Harry Faulkner, Wendy Balder, and Alan Schmaljohn



### **Thinking About Race (May 2024) – “We all need one another.”**

Isabel Wilkerson discussed her book Caste in an interview with Krista Tippett in March 2023.

“Our caste system is hurting all of us, the dominating caste and the subordinated castes. We changed the laws but we didn’t change ourselves. We in the U.S. are not generous to our own

people; we do not want the ‘undeserving’ group to have equity. We need both to change ourselves and dismantle structural racism. Writing Caste is my prayer to this country, for humanity. In a world without caste, we would look upon all humanity with wonderment; we would be invested in the wellbeing of others. We all need one another.”

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 12 noon, currently via Zoom. If you would like to attend, contact the clerk at [david.etheridge@verizon.net](mailto:david.etheridge@verizon.net).