



Gunpowder Friends Meeting

Welcome to the **June 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).

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

We are excited and delighted to invite *everyone* to our ongoing **Second Sunday Sings program each second Sunday from 9:00 am 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 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**, *continued*

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 a lovely quiet 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

**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/>

### **Working Group on Racial Reconciliation (WGRR) Invitation**

Gunpowder Meeting's Working Group on Racial Reconciliation (WGRR) will hold its annual meeting to plan its work for the coming year. We will gather on June 20, 2024 at the meetinghouse (with a zoom option) from 12 noon to 2 pm.

The Working Group (Rebecca Richards, Jo Brown, Anita Langford) is inviting all who are able to join us for this one-time planning meeting, or we'd be happy for new members of the Working Group, too. We are seeking a broad array of perspectives, thoughts, suggestions, and ideas as we plan for the future.

One suggestion we are considering is a book study based on last year's one book, Healing Resistance by Kazu Haga, as a deeper dive into the implications of Kingian nonviolence for the way we live our lives. And we think some of you might have other good resources to consider. If you can't attend the meeting but want to make a suggestion, we'd love to hear it.

If you can join us in person, please bring a lunch; fruit and dessert will be provided.

If you are available and willing to join us either in person or by zoom, please contact Anita Langford at [amlangfo@verizon.net](mailto:amlangfo@verizon.net) .



### Thinking About Race (June 2024) – Learning for Justice - SPLC

The Southern Poverty Law Center’s **Learning for Justice** program recently released a new publication to help teach high school-age students about Black Americans’ struggle for equality and civil rights. The *Teaching the Civil Rights Movement* framework offers five teaching strategies:

1. **“Connecting the past to the present** highlights the importance of the Civil Rights Movement by examining current local struggles....
2. **“Knowing how to talk about race and racism** helps students learn about identity. ....
3. **“Educating to realize power** teaches students to understand their own capacity for action ....
4. **“Revealing the unseen** expands the lens of the freedom struggle to include activists beyond the Rv. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks. Textbooks traditionally focus on court victories and federal legislation and oftentimes obscure lessons on activism and local action.
5. **“Resisting sanitized accounts of history** involves using resources within this framework to provide age-appropriate and culturally responsive ways to refuse sanitized history lessons, which limit students’ understanding of racial injustice and oppression.”

The full framework plus guides, lesson plans and films can be found at [www.learningforjustice.org](http://www.learningforjustice.org) .

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).

## Forum on Vocal Ministry, 19<sup>th</sup> Fifth Month 2024

### Queries to prompt Sharing in a “Worshipful Discussion” format

- How have you experienced giving and receiving vocal ministry at Gunpowder?
- What has helped you clarify that moment when it is yours to give a message?
- If you have not shared vocal ministry, do you experience a barrier or are you comfortable with that completely?

### Guides and Advices concerning vocal ministry

From the Current Baltimore Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice:

Sometimes during worship, the Spirit leads one or more Friends to speak out of the silence. Vocal ministry arises from a leading, a persistent sense that one is being compelled to rise and allow the Spirit to speak through us. Before speaking, Friends go through a process of discernment: Is this a message for me? Is this a message to be shared privately with others? Is this a message from Spirit to be shared with all present? Sometimes a message is not yet ripe, or comes clearly but is meant only for the person receiving it, not for the group.

(Shirley Dodson, 1980)

Friends do not come to meeting prepared to speak or not to speak. If physically able, Friends stand to share messages; they are encouraged to speak clearly and loudly enough so all can hear, with as few words as possible but as many as necessary. Typically, Friends speak only once. If afterwards a message feels incomplete, perhaps the rest of the message is meant to be shared by another. Friends who do not speak aloud uphold the meeting by their worshipful presence. Even if not a word is spoken, the meeting for worship can be profoundly nurturing.

(Thomas Kelly, 1944)

Pendle Hill Pamphlet, “Prophetic Ministry,” Howard Brinton. pp. 26-27

“We may conclude that too much regulation quenches the spirit and too little leaves open the door for unedifying utterance.... Too much inwardness leads to vagueness and formlessness, too much outwardness to a rigidity which hampers the freedom of the Spirit.

But outward and inward are not of equal value in religion. The Spirit is primary. It is better to err on the side of too much rather than too little freedom. A Quaker saint once wrote, ‘Dear people of God, be tender over the least breathings of God’s Spirit in one another.’ Such tenderness toward the weak is a source of spiritual strength to both speaker and hearer.”

## **Forum on Vocal Ministry, 19<sup>th</sup> Fifth Month 2024, *continued***

Pendle Hill Pamphlet #256, "The Prophetic Stream," William Taber.

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In the twelfth and fourteenth chapters of I Corinthians, Paul makes it sound as if prophecy were very common. In fact, his advice in the fourteenth chapter suggests that nearly everyone in the church of Corinth wanted to prophesy. We might say that he was asking them to slow down their 'popcorn meeting,' for he said, "Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first be silent" (I Corinthians 14:29, 30)

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The Lord God has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him that is weary, Morning by morning he wakens, he wakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. (Isaiah 50:4)

Remembering that this passage may have influenced Jesus' picture of himself, we can also remember Jesus' spiritual disciplines—the long times of prayer and solitude in which he allowed himself to be taught so that he might have the tongue of the taught, an incredibly gentle but powerful gift with words. This passage also suggests the marvelous economy of Jesus' words. Just as we were told in the last song that the Servant would not need to shout and make a big noise, we see that it takes only a few well-chosen words to encourage, just as the most powerful medicine often comes in the smallest dose to heal