



Welcome to the **October 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.

NORTH COUNTY FOOD BANK is asking for a rotation of focused donations to keep the stock rolling on their shelves.

For OCTOBER, it's called "**Eat Fruits not Candy**" -- applesauce, canned fruit, dried fruit.

All food donations need to be non-perishables.

OCTOBER FORUM, October 20 -- Exploration of the themes in this year's "one book" (see below)

Together we will begin a conversation around the relationship between prophetic action and spiritual practice.

Not everyone will have read both books before the forum -- **COME ANYWAY!!**

Even if you only get to read a few pages of each prior to the forum, it may help you have a sense of the authors' perspectives.

Forum, follows Meeting for Worship, begins around 11:30 (concludes by 1:00) and is always available through the tech Bridge.

THE ONE BOOK for this year is a "two-fer" -- two complementary Pendle Pamphlets.

"The Prophetic Stream" by Bill Taber looks at prophetic ministry in both Biblical and early Quaker life.

"A Quietness Within" by Elaine Pryce turns to the wisdom of Christian mystics and early Quakers.

Both writers help us identify the sources of strength and resilience which help us keep our balance in trying times. **PLEASE PICK UP YOUR COPIES** of these books at the Meeting House (a signup sheet helps us know who has theirs).

Those who cannot pick them up will receive a copy by mail.

Book Study Group in Spring of 2025

Gunpowder's Working Group for Racial Reconciliation is inviting Friends to a book study group this spring to dig a little deeper into Kazu Haga's book, *Healing Resistance*, and the six principles of Kingian nonviolence outlined there.

The group will meet biweekly, in person, on three Saturday mornings. Suggested location and dates are March 8th, March 22, and April 5, 2025, from 9 to 11am, at Stony Run Friends Meeting House library for convenience of location and parking.

We will focus on two principles of nonviolence at each session.

Announcements, *continued*

Interested Friends are invited to contact Anita Langford at amlangfo@verion.net or to text or call Jo Brown, who has offered to facilitate, at 717-385-5813 for more information.

PS: The Working Group is also happy to care for an online book-study group should the interest arise.

Clerk's Musings

A word about language: I often express myself in "God" language; It is the language that I grew up hearing and using and so it feels comfortable to me. However – my own belief is much, much broader. It encompasses Holy One, Creator, Spirit, All That Is, That which is Unknowable and Unnamable, without gender, and so much more. I invite you to interpret the language I use in whatever way works best for you.

When my daughters were quite young, eighteen months, three years old, and five years old, I first began to explore the Quaker path. The girls and I attended Meeting for Worship together. I'd settle on a bench with a child on either side and the youngest snuggled in my lap. Sometimes, they'd whisper a question. I remember my eldest daughter, Rebecca, asking me what people were doing. "Listening for God." "Do they hear him?" "Sometimes." "Have you heard him?" "Yes." "What does He sound like?" Well, this stopped me short. I had heard that inner voice but as hard as I tried, I could not describe what it sounded like. That's true even today, but the clarity and directness of it's biddings continue to ring true in my life.

The first time I clearly heard that voice I was directed to lay hands on someone in healing. That happened twice. Each time I said "No, I don't know how to do that. You need to find someone else." And each time my heart ached for having said "no" until I finally promised that if I were asked again I would do as I was bidden. Years later, that call was repeated and for the first time, I laid hands on someone in healing. I listened carefully to the guidance of Spirit, and as I followed that guidance, healing happened. That day I learned that I didn't need to know what to do, I only needed to listen and obey Spirit's guidance. I learned that when Spirit asks, everything that is required will be provided to complete the work. That voice was kind, forgiving, insistent, loving and yes, quiet.

Another time I was asked by New York Yearly Meeting to engage with Friends in the country of Georgia; to bring refugee aid and conflict resolution skills to that country. I had never stepped into work of that magnitude and felt unclear that I had the knowledge or the ability to carry it forward – and so I prayed. I prayed for three days before I heard that voice. It was not small or quiet! It roared "Just do it!!!" clearly annoyed with my persistent query. I asked for additional guidance but that was all I got: "Just do it!!!" and so I moved into the work and again what was needed fell into place.

As I've learned to listen for and to the Presence, that voice has become a constant companion and guide. Over the years it has become my habit to share these experiences, not because they make me special in any way – just the opposite – I share them because I firmly believe that it is possible for everyone in their everyday lives to hear the voice of Spirit as eyes and ears and hearts open to accept the reality of God's presence and love and guidance. May it be so.

In Peace,
Greta



Thinking About Race (October 2024)

Gunpowder Meeting's Working Group for Racial Reconciliation will present a Forum on Reparations on December 15th. In preparation for this forum, this regular newsletter column will contain some writings from a variety of sources related to this topic in October, November and December.

This month we share words from two letters written by John Woolman. The first passage is from a letter that Woolman sent to North Carolina Friends in 1757, urging them to refrain from slave keeping. In this letter, Woolman quotes the prophet Isaiah as a model of right relationship:

“And the works of righteousness shall be peace; and the effects of righteousness, quiet and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.”

– Isaiah 32:17-18

The second letter was written by Woolman in 1757 to a North Carolina enslaver:

“When we remember that all nations are of one blood, that in this world we are subject to the like afflictions and infirmities of body, the like disorders and frailties in mind, the like temptations, the same death, and the same judgement, and that the all-wise Being is Judge and Lord over us all, it seems to raise an idea of general brotherhood, and a disposition easy to be touched with a feeling of each other's afflictions; but when we forget those things, and look chiefly at our outward circumstances, in this and some ages past, constantly retaining in our minds the distinction between us and them, with respect to our knowledge and improvement in things Divine, natural and artificial, our breasts being apt to be filled with fond notions of superiority, there is danger of erring in our conduct toward them.

-John Woolman, some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes