



Welcome to the **November 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: BUTTER DRIVE for Holiday baskets

Dear Friends, For the holidays -- Thanksgiving and Christmas -- we are helping the North County Food Bank prepare baskets for holiday dinners.

Our contribution is 30 **pounds of butter for each holiday!!** By my calculations, @ \$4/lb we need \$120 for each holiday. We can do this!!

It is easiest to collect cash and have one shopper buy the butter.

Please give \$\$\$ to Rebecca. (If you need to write a check, please make payable to Rebecca Richards, so as to not heap more work on Joan, our underpaid and overworked treasurer.)

THANKS ALL!!

NOVEMBER FORUM -- Considering Death and Dying as a Spiritual Practice

There are many areas of this topic which need our attention -- estate planning, advanced directives for health care decision making, how to care for our physical remains (burial, cremation, body donation), gift bequests -- to name a few. Most of these relate directly to the end of life... ours!! specifically!! The assumption being that we'll address them "someday," maybe when we get "older".

Less often do we hear the topic raised as a matter of spiritual growth, even spiritual practice. But consider this quote from Fr. Thomas Keating:

"Death is not a changing of worlds, as most imagine, as much as the walls of this world infinitely expanding."

In [Grace in Dying](#), Kathleen Dowling Singh, shares her belief that every person enters that infinite grace in the moments before and as we die. She also posits that by "taking the one seat" (whatever your spiritual practice) it is possible to experience that grace, that infinite expansiveness in this life. Rebecca Richards will invite us into an exploration of this proposition in the November Forum.

DECEMBER FORUM – Forum on Reparations

As Friends consider, pray, and work towards repairing the harms of the past and committing ourselves to justice and reconciliation moving forward, it can be helpful to understand a wide variety of good faith perspectives and concerns, to deepen and sharpen our understanding. In our forum in December, hear

how one class at a local Quaker school addresses good faith arguments concerning the topic of reparations owed to the descendants of those oppressed by the institution of American slavery, Jim Crow laws, and housing discrimination. Eleventh and twelfth grade students in one class read Ta-Naheisi Coates's article, "The Case for Reparations," followed by good faith critiques of Coates's position from various Black scholars. In our December 15th forum, Gunpowder Friends will consider and learn more about this approach as a way of sharpening our own understanding.

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.

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.

SING IN THE NEW YEAR January 1, 2025, Community Sing Led by Ruth Fitz

Save the date! We will have the opportunity to sing in the new year on January 1st, 2025, 10 am - 4pm with shared meal for lunch.

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.

Abide

In the final exercise of the final day at our third Participating in God's Power residency we engaged in a guided meditation practice. There were three queries spaced over fifteen minutes each. The first query that was lifted up was "What one thing does your conscience have to say to you right now?" One word

came to me immediately. That word was abide. And so began the turning over in my mind and heart. What does it mean for me to abide now, in this place and time of my life?

When this word first rose for me it came with its own sense of meaning – to rest in the arms of Spirit; to dwell. It turns out that’s not so far from the biblical definition: to dwell, remain, be present, be held and kept.

Friend Ruth Fitz teaches a chant, the words of which are “Abide in me, as I abide in you. We are one. We are one.” In that chant, I found the essence. I ask Spirit to abide in me as I seek to abide in Spirit; resting in one another’s being. That abiding with and in one another makes us one. How utterly amazing is that!

In Peace,
Greta



Thinking About Race (November 2024)

Gunpowder Meeting’s Working Group for Racial Reconciliation will present a Forum on Reparations on December 15th. In preparation for this forum, we are using this regular column (October to December) to present a broad range of perspectives related to this topic. These quotes, brief as they are, are only a snapshot and do not represent any considered values of our community, but help us hear a variety of voices.

This month we share words from two African American scholars, Adolph Reed and Glenn Loury.

The first passage is from a TV interview with Adolph Reed:

“We don’t need to couch the demand for justice and equality in the language of payback, which opens up to all other kinds of petty debates. But, to say, this is the kind of society we want *now*. Once you try to justify demands for justice in the present on the basis of suffering in the past, everybody suffered in the past. So, then you get into that ... debate about who suffered more.”

From the conservative economist from Brown University, Glenn Loury in a PBS interview:

“The only way, in my view, to effectively discharge that moral obligation [that the United States owes to the descendants of enslaved people and of the victims of Jim Crow brutality] is to embed it within a broader humanistic vision for the society as a whole.”