



Welcome to the **March 2025 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).

### MARCH FORUM – Peace Testimonies: March 16<sup>th</sup> 2025, 11:30am-1:00pm

"Letting in the Light: How the Peace Testimony works in a time of chaos."

Jo Brown and Janet Abrams will facilitate.

### ADULT EDUCATION?

The Ministry and Worship committee would like to hear from you about your hopes and dreams for adult education -- what would you like to do together?

Please contact Dave Fitz, Rebecca Richards, Lisa Sutton, Janet Abrams or Jo Brown with your ideas.

### MARCH REQUESTS For The North County Food Pantry

**PASTA!!** -- Dry boxed pasta, pasta sauce, kids canned pasta, mac & cheese please.

AND to "add a bit of better butter" to the Easter Dinner Baskets, we are contributing 25 pounds 🧈!! In this case it's easiest to give cash and have one person buy butter. We'll need about \$100. Rebecca Richards and Kathy Marten are happy to take your \$\$ 😊

### LET US SEE what "Good News" we can find together

Did that invitation get your attention? Well, it's just another way for us to think about what we'll do when we gather for Bible Study at Gunpowder this (and every fourth) Sunday morning at 9 a.m.. We read aloud a short section of a given book of the Hebrew Bible (we prefer not to use the term "Old Testament") or the Christian Bible (also sometimes called the "New Testament"). We then reflect on how the reading connects with our own experience and what understanding we can discern as we read it now, today. Early Quakers were steeped in the Bible, but they understood it not as an authoritative text with one fixed meaning given long ago, but a source of truth that is continually renewed and revealed. They also read the Bible to listen for the Spirit that is the source of the words. So this is this spirit in which we read and discover together. It's really quite moving what arises when we grapple with a text through the lenses of our different lives and experiences.

For the next stretch of time, we're reading from the Gospel of Mark (the title literally means "good news"), a story of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. It is one of four "canonical" gospels, so

called because it was chosen by early church leaders (4th century) to be included (along with the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John) in the Christian Bible from among many other narratives of Jesus' life that were circulating among early followers of Jesus (we've read from both the "canonical" and "non-canonical" gospels over the years). All of the stories of Jesus' life are a bit (or a lot) different in what they include and how they recall some of the central stories of his life and his teachings. But for now, we're focused on the earliest written of the canonical gospels, Mark.

As we chose this reading, we noted that the times in which Jesus of Nazareth was born and lived were quite tumultuous under the dominance of the Roman Empire. What might his life and teachings, as recorded by his followers who heard it as "good news," have to say to us today? Let's find out together.

### **SECOND Zoom Social**

The Care and Oversight Committee will be hosting an informal zoom social with Anne and Bob Heaton on **Tuesday, March 11, at 4 pm**. Please contact Karen O'Mara [karenschomara@gmail.com](mailto:karenschomara@gmail.com) if you wish to participate.

### ***Register now for: a GATHERING OF HEALERS***

#### **Calling all Spirit-led, Hands-on Energy workers!**

#### **March 28-30, 2025, at Gunpowder Friends Meeting, Sparks, Maryland**

This is envisioned as a time get to know one another, to give and receive work, and to talk about way forward as a cohort of healers in a deeply worshipful setting. You may go to this link <https://ivory-dre-18.tiiny.site> to access additional information, schedule, and registration form. If you'd like additional information, please contact Greta Kirk Mickey: text or call 315-694-1359 or email [greta.mickey@gmail.com](mailto:greta.mickey@gmail.com).

### **Friends! Join us for FAMILY FOCUSED WORSHIP on March 30, 2025, 10:00 a.m.**

Potluck lunch to follow. Bring a dish if you are able.

Friends of all ages--as always, but especially on this day--invited to join us for meeting for worship. Faith and Play story will feature in our time together.

Please spread the word!!!

### **EPISTLE from the 2024-2025 *School of the Spirit* Cohort**

Dear Friends,

For the past year members of The School of the Spirit's "Participating in God's Power" program have been studying, praying, and listening deeply to and for the leadings of Spirit. At our final residency (February 14 through February 16, 2025) we were led to create an epistle to be shared with "all Friends everywhere". You will find that epistle below:

#### **To all Friends everywhere,**

The 2024-2025 cohort of School of the Spirit's "Participating in God's Power" program sends you its loving greetings. We are led to share with other Quakers some of the insights from our work together:

Relationships in community matter.

Living connection to Spirit matters.

Loving action in the world matters.

Over five long-weekend gatherings and four day-long Zoom calls, we have developed an intentional community of mutual support and accountability. This support in our seeking has led us to a deeper connection to the Divine Spark, beyond that which we have experienced before.

We know this connection to the divine to be primary, the first condition necessary for work in the world. Without it, our work is subject to the wounds of our ego. With it, we can see the way to be active in the healing work the world needs. Our experience together is that outward action is sustained by divine connection – and divine connection is strengthened by outward action.

We need Meetings that are committed to learning how to do both of these together. We have learned that our cups can runneth over if we work to keep the cup full and let God help. We need each other, and we need God through one another. We are committed to learning how to keep asking for what we need.

We know finding unity of spirit together can feed the power of our action in the world. We know we cannot force change on another. True change-making connection can only happen when we listen with care, respond with compassion, and keep love and care in our hearts regardless of outcome.

We have found that we equip ourselves best for clear action by committing to a daily discipline – a practice for connecting with the Divine. We seek to listen for Spirit in each moment, each interaction, each action. We know the sacred in the world shows up uniquely; that is, we each can make change in the context, at the scale, among the people, and doing the thing that matches our innermost gift.

We know we may not yet fully know what our gifts are, and we know they can change. It's often hard to discern our own gifts. We need others to help us name them and to reflect them back to us.

To do the work we are called to, we have to be responsive to and follow the leadings given to us. We are convinced that now is the time to live fully into our calling. Living in this society, we cannot avoid being complicit. Non-action poisons our souls.

We know we have what we need to be able to act.

We know we can only do what has been given us to do.

We know that only actions grounded in love can create the transformation the world needs.

In God's love,

The 2024-2025 cohort of Participating in God's Power

## 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.

Dearest Friends,

I begin with immense gratitude for the gift of our beloved community. You have carried me on wings of prayer filled with hope and healing as my knee is now one hundred percent replaced. I have sensed you walking with me each step of the way. Who would have imagined such a thing a hundred years ago? Nonetheless, my energy level remains low and so I will keep these musings short.

This is a time when our mettle as a faith community will be strongly tested. There may be questions of what, if anything, we as a community are willing to risk for and how far that risk will take us. What sacrifices might we be willing to make? How might we support the meekest among us? I invite us to hold these things in our hearts now as preparation.

Greta