



Gunpowder Friends Meeting

Welcome to the **April 2026 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.

It's spring! AND it is Nominating season for our Meeting! At a recent Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business, we asked Friends to reflect on service to our Meeting which could include serving on a committee or a special project. Here is some of what was shared:

"Committee work builds connections and community."

"Involvement helps us see how the Meeting functions as a volunteer organization."

"Serving is a mirror through which we can better see ourselves."

"There are seasons of service. At times we have more to give than others. The meeting supports the cyclical nature of our service. We are warmly welcomed when we serve and when we don't."

"All our work is spiritual."

If you are curious about how you might serve our community, Nominating Committee welcomes a conversation with you. We are eager to hear your interests and leadings, for now and/or in the future.

For the April 12th Coffee Social, Nominating Committee will provide some table-talk-starters to stimulate conversation about our Meeting's committees and "operation." We hope you will participate to both learn and share.

From your NomComm Friends -- Wendy Balder, Tina Beneman, Ruth Fitz, Marilyn Rothstein, LouAnne Smith (clerk)

April Forum, Third Sunday, April 19th

We are taking a clue from the long-held practice in our Spiritual Formation program to celebrate April as Poetry Month. What can we learn? How can Poetry help us plumb the depths of human experience to bring joy, hope, wisdom, humor... and so much else.

** another opportunity to hear and share poetry is the SF April Dinner gathering on April 16th!!

McKim Community Games: Sunday, April 26

For the past four years, Gunpowder Friends have been supporting the McKim Community Games, a city-wide event for young track and field athletes who hail from across Baltimore City and the state. We help Coach Garfield (McKim's Executive Director) and Coach Tynisha to make the games run smoothly, from helping athletes to line up for each event, to giving out awards, and assisting in the concession stand.

It's among the greatest feel-good events in Baltimore. Come and cheer on hundreds of athletes and enjoy the day with families and fellow citizens.

If you'd like to volunteer, contact Amy Schmaljohn (amy@schmaljohn.com or 410-245-8300).

AFSC Love as Action Events <https://afsc.org/love-action>

From their website: "AFSC invites Friends across the country to gather in silent worship in public spaces to give witness to the rising authoritarianism and oppression in the United States. Shared witness reflects core Quaker principles: peace, equality, integrity, and community. And taking action publicly is a visible commitment to justice and compassion." There is information about planned events and hosting events on the website.

Food Pantry – April: Spring Cleaning Supplies

While there was no specific request this month, it is indeed spring cleaning time. Laundry detergent and other cleaning supplies much appreciated.

From [Right Sharing of World Resources](#) in response to our stamp donations:

"Your generosity makes love visible — strengthening communities and offering connection in challenging times. Thank you for your partnership in 2025. You are essential to this work as we explore the power of enough and our shared responsibility to one another and the earth."

An Invitation from the Quakers Healing Circle (Q.H.C.)

The Quakers Healing Circle has discerned that we are called to hold the world in the Light for healing from 8:00 to 8:15 every Monday evening. We are also clear to invite all who may be so led to join us in this practice that the Light may be magnified. Please plan to join with the Quakers Healing Circle as we hold the world in the Light and invite everyone that you can! If you have questions about this practice or Q.H.C. please contact Greta Kirk Mickey at greta.mickey@gmail.com.

York ICE Vigils

Vigils are continuing to be held Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:30am-11:00 am, at the ICE Processing Center, 1605 Clugston Road, York PA 17404, except holidays or inclement weather. From Indivisible York: "The intention is to be a quiet presence, bearing witness – and a resource for people coming out of check-in appointments. We offer compassionate listening for those who have a need to tell their stories, and information about legal resources and other types of assistance that families may need after their encounter with ICE." If interested please contact Jennifer Robinson, jlerobinson@gmail.com



Thinking About Race (April 2026)

Loving Your Enemies

Let us be practical and ask the question, How do we love our enemies?

First, we must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. It is impossible even to begin the act of loving one's enemies without the prior acceptance of the necessity, over and over again, of forgiving those who inflict evil and injury upon us. It is also necessary to realize that the forgiving act must always be initiated by the person who has been wronged, the victim of some great hurt, the recipient of some tortuous injustice, the absorber of some terrible act of oppression. The wrongdoer may request forgiveness. He may come to himself, and, like the prodigal son, move up some dusty road, his heart palpitating with the desire for forgiveness. But only the injured neighbor, the loving father back home, can really pour out the warm waters of forgiveness.

Forgiveness does not mean ignoring what has been done or putting a false label on an evil act. It means, rather, that the evil act no longer remains as a barrier to the relationship. Forgiveness is a catalyst creating the atmosphere necessary for a fresh start and a new beginning. It is the lifting of a burden or the cancelling of a debt. The words "I will forgive you, but I'll never forget what you've done" never explain the real nature of forgiveness. Certainly, one can never forget, if that means erasing it totally from his mind. But when we forgive, we forget in the sense that the evil deed is no longer a mental block impeding a new relationship. Likewise, we can never say, "I will forgive you, but I won't have anything further to do with you." Forgiveness means reconciliation, a coming together again. Without this, no man can love his enemies. The degree to which we are able to forgive determines the degree to which we are able to love our enemies.

- *From Loving Your Enemies, a sermon by Martin Luther King, Jr., from Strength to Love (Harper and Rowe, 1963, reprinted by Beacon Press in A Gift of Love: Sermons from Strength to Love and Other Preachings, 2012).*

Inside Out – writings from Greta Kirk Mickey

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.

Hornet Story

Some years ago, I was enjoying worship in an old meeting house that didn't have air conditioning. It was a hot summer day and so the windows were all open. I chose to sit in front of a window to feel the sun beat on my back. It felt glorious. I closed my eyes and slipped deep into worship. At some point I became aware of an insect walking on my arm. Eyes still closed, I pondered what it might be. It wasn't a fly or any insect that I could easily identify, so I peeked and saw a black hornet. I watched him for a moment, closed my eyes and continued in worship. The hornet flew away several minutes later. So, you say, why are you now sharing this story?

I'm sharing this story because I learned something that day. I learned something about fear and how it feeds conflict. I learned something about trust and faith. And I learned that the way that I behave can influence the way other people behave. That probably feels like a lot of weight to give a hornet walking on my arm so allow me to explain.

In a different place, and a different setting, I might have reacted to finding a hornet on my arm from a place of fear. I might have swung something at it thinking to harm it. I might have attempted to swat it off. Those actions, based in fear, might well have awakened fear in the hornet and caused it to bite me. The other path, the one that I chose that morning, gave us both the grace to simply greet one another and continue on with our days. I trusted that this small creature meant me no ill will. He was simply walking up something that was in his path. I had faith that if I were able to embrace his presence, he would do me no harm.

I later learned that more than one person in the room was watching the hornet's progress as he walked up my arm. I also learned that they were each trying to decide what to do. Among the options was to strike the hornet. When they saw me open my eyes, observe the hornet, and return to worship, those Friends relaxed and they too returned to worship.

Since my encounter with that hornet, there have been many times when letting go of fear and opening to trust and faith have changed a potentially negative outcome to one where hope and grace abide. I am grateful for the lesson Black Hornet brought me.