



Gunpowder Friends Meeting

Welcome to the **May 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.

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

May Forum: Third Sunday, May 17th 11:30 am

Not all Meetings practice the sharing of joys and sorrows as part of weekly worship. It has been our practice at Gunpowder for a number of years and recently seems of increasing importance. Henri Nouwen writes that joy and sorrow are "as close to each other as the splendid colored leaves of a New England fall to the soberness of the barren trees." Most of us want to embrace the one and shun the other.

Yet, each week in the deeply felt sharing of joys and sorrows we are reminded that life presents not an either/or, but a both/and. By sharing in community, we experience the multiplication of joy, the comfort in holding the sorrow with others. All of us need this -- in families, communities, our nation, the world -- if we are to navigate choppy and troubling waters.

What can we celebrate?

What must we grieve?

How does community help us do both?

ANNOUNCEMENTS, *continued*

Meeting for Remembrance: Monday, May 25th, 11:00 am

Memorial Day brings Friends at Gunpowder Meeting an opportunity to remember and honor those who have gone before us. Beginning with worship on the West porch and then, with flowers brought from our gardens, we decorate the graves in the burial ground. We also might speak of others -- friends and family -- whom we honor, or a memory we want to share.

Following this we share a pot luck picnic.

Intergenerational Worship and Community Potluck: 5th Sunday, May 31st

Once again a 5th Sunday on the calendar brings us the the opportunity for worship with a slightly different format -- a bit of programming and a time of reflection along with time for silent worship. This will be followed by a community potluck lunch.

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 – May: 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 (May 2026)

Can We Love All?

Congressman John Lewis (1940-2020) describes his Christian faith as the foundation of his commitment to nonviolence:

I believe in the philosophy and discipline of nonviolence. I accepted it not simply as a technique or as a tactic, but as a way of life, a way of living. We have to arrive at the point, as believers in the Christian faith, that in every human being there is a spark of divinity. Every human personality is sacred, something special. We don't have a right, as another person or as a nation, to destroy that spark of divinity, that spark of humanity, that is made and created in the image of God.

I saw Sheriff Clark in Selma, or Bull Connor in Birmingham, or George Wallace, the governor of Alabama, as victims of the system. We were not out to destroy these men. We were out to destroy a vicious and evil system.

Theologian Walter Wink (1935-2012) recalls a tense moment in Selma in which a reminder to love their enemies shocked the conscience of the crowd and forged a nonviolent path forward:

King so imbued this understanding of nonviolence into his followers that it became the ethos of the entire civil rights movement. One evening... the large crowd of black and white activists standing outside the Ebenezer Baptist Church was electrified by the sudden arrival of a black funeral home operator from Montgomery. He reported that a group of black students demonstrating near the capitol just that afternoon had been surrounded by police on horseback, all escape barred, and cynically commanded to disperse or take the consequences. Then the mounted police waded into the students and beat them at will. Police prevented ambulances from reaching the injured for two hours...

The crowd outside concerts seethed with rage. Cries went up "Let's march!". Behind us, across the street, stood, rank on rank, the Alabama State Troopers and the local police forces of Sheriff Jim Clark. The situation was explosive. A young black minister stepped to the microphone and said, "It's time we sang a song". He opened with the line, "Do you love Martin King?" to which those who knew the song responded, "Certainly, Lord!"... Right through the chain of command of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference he went, the crowd each time echoing, warming to the song, "Certainly, certainly, certainly Lord!" Without warning he sang out, "Do you love Jim Clark?"-the sheriff?! Cer...certainly, Lord" came the stunned halting reply. "Do you love Jim Clark?" "Certainly, Lord"- it was stronger this time. "Do you love Jim Clark?" Now the point had sunk in, as surely as Amos in chapters 1 and 2: "Certainly, certainly, certainly Lord!"

Thinking About Race, *Continued*

Reverend James Bevel then took the mike. We are not just fighting for our rights, he said but for the good of the whole society. "It's not enough to defeat Jim Clark--do you hear me, Jim? - - we want you converted. We cannot win by hating our oppressors. We have to love them into changing."

From Daily Meditations, Center for Action and Contemplation,
(September 22, 2025)

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.

Violence

What is violence? As a young person – probably into my teens, when I thought of violence it was always an act of physical violence. Someone hit someone else. It could be a slap a kick, a punch, or something far more egregious. That was the extent of my understanding of violence.

As I grew older, and possibly a bit wiser, I opened to the understanding of deeper forms of pain; different kinds of violence. The pain of being scarred emotionally or psychologically can be far more challenging to heal. Friends of a certain generation will remember the saying "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me." Most of us have come to know that our bones almost always heal, but the pain inflicted on our psyches lingers and lingers. We can probably all think of instances when that type of pain was inflicted on us and conversely, when we may have inflicted that type of pain on someone else, sometimes in anger, sometimes out of malice, other times in ignorance. Whatever the reason that scar remains with us. Perhaps it really isn't so very different from the lifelong limp from a broken leg or the ache in a broken bone when it rains. All reminders of the pain we have endured.

There can be great sorrow here. There can also be great hope as we open our hearts to accept Spirit's healing Love and, as we are healed we find that we are able to open our hearts to whoever perpetrated pain of any kind and harmed us. When we are able to offer forgiveness to others, we find freedom within ourselves.