Gunpowder Friends Meeting

Welcome to the **October 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.*

Curious about Spiritual Formation, or a past participant? "Always We Begin Again..."
Join us in-person on October 15 at 6 pm at the Meetinghouse,
OR, online at 7 pm (on the usual GFM worship link)

Spiritual Formation at Gunpowder Meeting offers a variety of ways to explore deeper connections to Spirit with others in our beloved community and "to know one another in that which is eternal."

On the 3rd Thursday of every month, we gather in-person at 6 pm at the meetinghouse for dinner and table fellowship, which is followed by worship-sharing over a brief reading chosen to spark our spiritual curiosity. This year our readings will be chosen from Daniel Ladinsky's collection of spiritual poetry, *Love Poems from God*. At the same time (7 pm) another group gathers in virtual space on Zoom for similar ways of exploring our spiritual lives together. Lisa Sutton will be facilitating this group. Both groups will aim to end by 8:30 pm.

We hope to rekindle our small group program for those of you who would like an additional opportunity to share deeply with 3 or 4 other Friends. These small spiritual friendship groups gather monthly, either in-person or online for about 90 minutes. The groups will be offered a query each month to encourage Friends to "speak from the heart" when sharing where their spiritual journey is leading them, however, groups are free to choose another path toward deep sharing as they are led.

We would like to know your interest in participating this year so that we can make sure you get all the materials you need before October 15, AND begin putting the small groups together. Please contact us ASAP to let us know if you want to be part of the large in-person group, the large online group, a small group meeting in-person, or a small group meeting online. Emails to jmabrams1@gmail.com or rebecca.richards4912@gmail.com.

For further information contact: Rebecca Richards, Wendy Balder, Janet Abrams, Wendy Snyder, SF coordinators for this year.

October Forum: Third Sunday, October 18, 11:30 am What do we do in the Silence?
Our forum on October 18 will focus on our experiences in Meeting for Worship. We will have an opportunity to share ways of centering and challenges that arise with centering. There will be space to share experiences with receiving a message, letting it season, and discerning when and how to offer it to the Meeting. We will explore the meaning of a "gathered meeting." Come with your questions and your stories. Everyone is welcome.

Love your Meeting House Gathering, Saturday, October 24, 2026
4 - 7 p.m., to be followed by a bonfire and fellowship
Friends are encouraged to bring any favorite supplies and equipment to tidy up inside and out, as well as any musical instruments and folding chairs to enjoy around the fire afterwards. Refreshments will be provided

Come one, Come All! Our New Elements of Quakerism course will meet each fourth First day, at the rise of Meeting (11:30) in the West room of the Meeting house starting October 25.

The New Elements of Quakerism course will be facilitated by Dave Fitz and Amy Schmaljohn. Our program is born of a process conceived and successfully run by Dave's brother, Phil, which provides an opportunity to open and explore our Quaker history, faith, and practice. There will be readings to help elucidate each topic. Your facilitators will briefly lift up their sense of the reading and share queries to consider during the ensuing robust worship sharing. We include below the syllabus listing the topic of each session. We hope that participants will be able to commit to participate fully in all (or at least most) sessions as we get to know one another and each topic builds to the next. The sense is that this program is not conducive to hybrid participation. We hope that both those new to Quakerism and those with long experience will feel led to participate. It will be a time of richness and renewal for us all!

Food Pantry: Items for School Lunches
Shelf-stable, single serving items that can be incorporated into children's lunches would be much appreciated, but donations must be in unopened packaging **with date stamps intact.** Unfortunately, individual single serving packs are usually not acceptable.

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

If you wish to support the work of the York Immigrant Rights Collective (IRC) in the work of assisting Haitian and other immigrant families impacted by ICE deportations, please consider donating with a check made payable to the Parish Resource Center with *York IRC* in the check memo line. Send your donation to Parish Resource Center 2160 Lincoln Highway East #18, Lancaster PA 17602.

Inside Out – writings from Greta Kirk Mickey

Listening in Tongues

I recently had a conversation with a couple of dear F/friends about how Quakers name our higher power and how we hear and understand one another. Some of us use language that mirrors our Christian beginnings with Jesus, Christ, God, etc. Some of us are uncomfortable with those names. Some of us use Goddess. Others are uncomfortable with that. Still others try to use words that might be less offensive to all, like Divine, Spirit, All that is, etc. As we come together in worship sharing, spiritual formation, and other gatherings it is not uncommon to hear the admonition to "Listen in tongues." meaning that we may translate another's word(s) to align with for our own understanding and comfort. For quite some time I was all too happy to grab on to this seemingly easy solution. Until this conversation.

I was recently at a weekend retreat at a Roman Catholic abbey with a group of Quakers. Many of those Friends reacted with great discomfort to being in the presence of traditional Christian paintings and statues. Some thought we should cover these items or take them down until we were leaving. My sense was that we need not embrace these things as our own, but that in our attempt to be understanding and open to how others believe; to how they understand their faith, we might open our hearts and minds to acknowledge a different way and that different ways of understanding our relationships with God are integral to our human experience. I remembered this as my friends and I talked. They lifted up this same sense in relation to language. Each of us has a different relationship to Spirit of necessity as we are all different. I wonder if, in this effort to translate the way others speak of God into language that we are comfortable with we don't risk losing the ability to truly hear the speaker. I wonder if in some way we don't dishonor the speaker or even perhaps unintentionally elevate our own understanding over theirs. It can be uncomfortable and challenging to listen deeply and to hear the speaker no matter what words they choose to use. In my experience, being challenged and made uncomfortable is often at the cutting edge of spiritual growth.

I am often surprised by how much is opened for me in this sort of brief exchange when I open to truly listening and hearing. I am continuing to hold this new opening. I invite you to join me.