

# **SEYM 2024 Yearly Meeting Gathering Worship Sharing**

## **Some Guidelines for Worship Sharing**

- We wait in silent worship, in union with each other, and share gleanings from our spiritual journeys.
- Our purpose is to search together in silence for God's truth and inspiration. We also hope to draw closer as a community by sharing deeply our spiritual experiences.
- No Friend is ever required to speak. Be a better listener than a speaker, but if you do share speak up and speak clearly for those who may be hard of hearing.
- In order to allow the space for each of us to share, be mindful of the length of one's offering. Typically each Friend shares only one time until all others have spoken.
- Listen fully to each person's words. Please do not interrupt or comment upon what another Friend has shared.
- Allow ample worship between sharings. Hold the gift that each person offers in the Light, without judgment.
- Try to speak from your own experience, rather than speaking of the experience of others or of abstract ideas.
- Avoid commenting on, or responding directly to, what someone else has said. One may, of course, share on themes or concerns raised by another as they apply to one's own life.
- Please do not repeat elsewhere what you have heard. Please respect the confidentiality of what is shared in the Worship Sharing session.
- Worship sharing depends on our respecting and honoring each other.

## Fifth Day Morning Worship Sharing

**“Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.” (Ephesians 6:14-15).**

“If you look for truth, you may find comfort in the end; if you look for comfort you will not get either comfort or truth only soft soap and wishful thinking to begin, and in the end, despair.”

*C. S. Lewis*

"Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leadings of God whose Light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life."

*Advices and Queries 22*

“Beloved, may my soul—and my community—  
have the grace  
of both a window and a door.”

*LaVerne Maria (LVM) Shelton*

“As Friends, we seem to have a heightened aversion to, or fear of, the shadow side—those parts that we’d rather not see. We like to focus on the light as if there is no shadow...” *Niyonu Spann*

“Only when we have heard where the authenticity lies can we discover our samenesses, rather than being riveted by and trapped in our differences, caught in the demand that everyone be just like us. We will never all be just like any one thing. We have not only been differentiated by our experience. We were born different as part of the infinite array of human possibilities. The glory and miracle of it is that we may be woven by the Holy Spirit into loving wholes inclusive of our differences – if we are willing to have that Love guide us.” *Patricia Loring*

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- 1. What is it about Truth that leads to comfort? What aspects of Truth lead to great discomfort? How can this be a good thing?**
- 2. When do I listen to the ‘leadings of God’ thereby bringing Light and new life to all I encounter?**
- 3. How does acknowledging my ‘shadow side’ help me to realize my authentic self?**
- 4. How can I live “my Truth” and still leave room for continuing revelation of God’s Truth within me?**

## Sixth Day Morning Worship Sharing

**“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.” (2 Corinthians 4:7).**

“It is an experience of discovery which starts the discoverer on a journey which is life-long. The discovery in itself is not uniquely a property of Quakerism... the discovery points a path and demands a journey, and gives you the power to make the journey.” *Elise Boulding*

“Transform yourself to transform the world.” *Grace Lee Boggs*

“Quakers, or ‘Friends,’ hold before themselves three central challenges: to listen to the Spirit, to love God and neighbor, and to risk whatever is necessary so to do. This is the legacy of Quaker spirituality, for those within the Friends tradition, and their gift and challenge to all Christians of all time. It is their lived response to Paul’s question, ‘What have you that you have not received?’ that leads them to drink deeply from the well of God’s Spirit and serve passionately in imitation of Christ.” *Grace Adolphsen Brame*

“Early Friends came out of their meetings in wonder and described themselves as being made ‘tender’. This term may sound a bit odd to us but it was a sign to them that the barriers built by their egos had fallen away. They saw each other with great compassion and tenderness. They saw that the enthrallment of self-centeredness was what had trapped them all. Once out of the trap, they no longer had to live the life of fear their egos handed them. They were free to become real Friends...” *Robert Griswold*

“For if the Divine Light is the Seed of God planted in the souls of human beings, in that Seed lies all the characteristics of its source. Consequently, the Light within is also the Divine Power within. It is the indestructible power in us that is able to create from nothing, able to make ways out of no way, able to change what appears to be the natural order of things.” *Ayesha Clark-Halkin Imani*

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- 1. What discoveries have I made that have set me on my spiritual journey?**
- 2. What is my understanding as a Friend of listening to Spirit for what is necessary and next? Do I step into the work even if there is risk?**
- 3. What does it mean to me to become tender? How does worship break down barriers of self-centeredness?**
- 4. When has the Seed of Light within me enabled me to create change?**

## Seventh Day Morning Worship Sharing

**“Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long” (Psalms 25:5).**

“I feel the call of my granddaughter (and my grandchild to come). My maternal grandmother was part of my household growing up and I remember how much she shaped who I am. Being close to my grandkids is returning to the beginning for me, as is being involved with my grown daughter and son as they grow their own families.” *Tomi Nagai-Rothe*

“How do we know / how we were meant to spend every second of our time? /  
Were we really meant to rush with all abandon toward / some earthly hilltop finish line?  
Or was God / telling us something / in those whispers to ‘be still,’ /  
That all along, / it was necessary, / to slow down, / trust, / and heal.” *Morgan Harper Nichols*

“A friend once said that figuring out the will of God in our lives is not like some cosmic pursuit but more like an afternoon at the playground. Instead of us pursuing God as if we are in a frantic cartoon chase, we find God patient, sitting on a bench, pleased to observe our antics. We might want to slide down the slide, but we are unsure. We may be nervous that this piece of equipment is off-limits. We might ask if it’s okay. ‘Of course, go ahead,’ God assures us. Then we might want to swing on the monkey bars. Worried we might not be allowed, we might pause, look over at God and ask, ‘Can I swing on the monkey bars?’ God will walk over and remind us: ‘Yes, this playground is a safe space for you. You are free to slide or swing or sit.’” *Kat Armas*

“One day you finally knew / what you had to do, and began, /  
Though the voices around you / kept shouting / their bad advice...  
But little by little, / as you left their voices behind, /  
The stars began to burn / through the sheets of clouds, /  
And there was a new voice, / which you slowly / recognized as your own, /  
That kept you company / as you strode deeper and deeper / into the world, /  
Determined to do / the only thing you could do – /  
Determined to save / the only life you could save.” *Mary Oliver*

“As we reach for the river of eternity, it rises to meet us and carries us along. This is the purpose of ministry – to be channels for Love’s continuing birth in the world.” *Noah Merrill*

- 1. What wisdom from those who have gone before me is part of my life’s path? What of my own life experience might give strength to those who come after me?**
- 2. How ‘playful’ am I on my spiritual journey? Do I listen with joy to Divine guidance?**
- 3. To what voices do I listen when confronting challenges of life? Do I trust my own sense of Spirit to guide my steps?**
- 4. What do I hear in God’s whispers?**