

Worship Sharing Fourth Day

Seeking

How/Manner/Method/Way/Witness

“Let the favor of God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands” (Psalm 90:17).

“To me, the Peace Testimony means I allow the love and truths laid before me to work within and change me, even when they’re inconvenient or not what I would have chosen for myself. Yielding to Spirit in every moment brings me into the Beloved Community. As William Penn reminds us, early Friends changed *‘themselves before they went about to change others. Their hearts were rent as well as their garments, and they knew the power and work of God upon them.’* May we be so blessed.” *Nadine Hoover*

“Whenever a powerful few have tried to pick and choose who counts, there have always been those of us who showed up for each other and built welcoming communities. Now it’s our time to show up, reject division, and chart a better future for all of us, no matter our ages, races, or genders.” *Natl Education Assoc/edjustice*

“At first, business Meetings were largely dedicated to answering queries...about the condition of the Meeting, support for poor and suffering Friends, and support for the travelling ministry. And the principal query was: How is the Truth prospering among you? How are Friends being gathered into Christ, established on this unshakable foundation, and how are you supporting Friends to live faithfully? Do we have space to see how the Spirit is leading us?” *Matt Rosen*

“Witness – This is a single Testimony rooted in our Quaker faith – not a basket of separate social testimonies. This Testimony is a form of prophecy — words and ways of living that express and live out God’s vision of the world. True prophecy stands in sharp contrast to the values and practices of Empire. Each dimension of this prophetic speaking and living flows from and is rooted in Quaker faith.” *Inward Light*

“Once I was clear on my purpose, and clear on how God was calling me, opportunities have manifested. But the same way that I do that for myself, that’s what we need to do organizationally. Because a lot of times opportunities will come up and they’ll feel like they’re really positive opportunities, but they’re not actually aligned with our calling as a people. Maybe it happens in another sphere, maybe it happens in another space. But I felt like I had to stand in integrity. And I think that’s what I want for all of us and for all of our institutions that we’re willing to take the risk that God will provide and that you know the Spirit will show up and that the doors will open if we are doing our very best to be faithful.” *Adria Gulizia*

“The experience of spiritual transformation does not feel safe. It is choosing to step into a new condition that we can’t yet see. It happens most powerfully in communities that are committed to love and a mutual search for Truth.” *Emily Provance*

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Queries

1. What are ways I can be ‘clear on my purpose’ for how God is calling? Do I trust that way will open for the correct path and opportunities?
2. How willing am I to consider ‘yielding to the Spirit in every moment’ if I do not already order my life in that fashion? Would now not be a time to be open to shifts and transformation in order to live faithfully?
3. How do I understand witness as a testimony of prophetic truth in the manner of Friends? How have I experienced this in my own life?
4. How can seeking translate to the how, the manner, the methods, the way of walking these ‘uncertain times’ as a member of the Religious Society of Friends? How do I dig into my roots to know when to hold, stand, or speak?

Worship Sharing Fifth Day Wellspring

Connect/Feed/Spirit/Continuing Revelation

“But those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty” (John 4:14).

“As I stepped through the door, I heard a voice. And the words that were implanted in my head and my soul at that moment were ‘God is all around.’ When God speaks there is no denying that voice and I knew instantly that it was true. God was in all I could see and hear, and beyond, in the very air I was breathing. It was a knowing that nothing could change. There was no going back. To this day this knowing informs my life. It informs my actions, and it informs my love. Our western culture has lost our interconnectedness with the Earth. We knew this once, a long time ago. Our ancestors knew this when they were indigenous somewhere on this Earth. I know you know this too deep inside.” *Liseli Haines*

“Looking at legends and stories today offers ways to find deeper insight into our own lives and ways of interacting. The stories can act as mirrors [and metaphors], reflecting our lives. Like listening for the Divine in Quaker worship, when we can take a moment to pause from the frantic pace of the world and listen more deeply, hearing meanings behind the words; we make space not only for these lessons, but also the inner teacher and Spirit to further guide us. By opening up further to story...we practice listening in ways that also open us further to hearing the Divine.” *Cai Quirk*

“And so having those people who can be places of refuge, to have that time together that's rooted in the Spirit and have people ask me sincerely, ‘What is your spiritual condition right now?’ And to have space to answer is itself a moment of calm. And sometimes something as simple as asking a question can create a bridge between the temporary struggles of this life, and that which is eternal and pure, which is like, ‘Oh, wow, you mean, I could do that for somebody else? Like we can do that together? We don't need to go to seminary to learn how to do that? We could just ask and create space for a real answer?’ Wow!” *Adria Gulizia*

“Joy cannot be stolen from us, as long as we keep living. It is the counterbalance...It belongs to each and every one of us. Don't abandon it, no matter what comes...remember that none of us are strangers, and that what will bind us together even in the worst of this will be remembering our shared humanity, and fighting to keep it, however we can and however we must, in the name of all that cannot be stolen. Even from the ashes, and no matter what comes, we do not abandon anyone—even strangers.” *Elizabeth Cronise McLaughlin*

“As a practice, continuing revelation asks each of us to tend the spiritual condition of the body and of ourselves. We are asked to listen to how we are led. Continuing revelation provides a framework for understanding that the qualities that help us be more faithful will change in us, both for ourselves and for our community.” *Anne Pomeroy*

“Spirit speaks to us directly in the immediacy and uniqueness of our condition in the moment. Spirit's messages may be tiny nudges, calls to action, experiences of oneness and anything in between, differing by individual and from moment to moment. Spirit sees us in our wholeness, and calls us into the individual and collective process of becoming more whole, more wholly and integrally ourselves. When we receive an opening from the Spirit, our job is to accept it, to yield to it, to sit with it and see how it resonates within, what actions it moves us to. We are invited to be mindful, asking ourselves and others: Were you faithful to the promptings of love and Spirit in your heart? Did you yield?” *Lu Harper*

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Queries:

1. How do I experience the spirit of God in a way that renews and affirms? What is my counterbalance?
2. Do my relationships—partner, friend, community—hold space to ask about my spiritual condition? What is that like? If not, how would I find someone/those who would talk with me about faithfulness?
3. What fortifies my heart, making me more tender and able to receive that which is eternal?
4. How does continuing revelation move me toward greater faithfulness to the promptings of Spirit?

Worship Sharing Sixth Day

Audacious Hope

Willingness/Limitless/Open Hearts

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged...God will be with you always" (Joshua 1:9).

"Because having, and nurturing, in your life a sphere for joy and connection and community and love and food and music and human difference and living and letting live is everything they are trying to take away. Be what scares them. Live lives in colors their eyes can't even see. Cook food they want to deport. Call someone you haven't in a while. Fight with a smile. Fail and come back. Be weird. Be welcoming. Kiss converts. Refuse despair. Be disobedient. Laugh loudly. Hide someone. Call out. Root down. They are waging a war on living. The more fully you live, the harder their job will be." *Anand Giridharadas*

"...that's part of our trouble. Thinking things are inevitable. Not believing change is possible." *Suzanne Collins*

"I want to live in a world where everyone has love and food and shelter and access to healing. I want to live in a world where everyone has time to create art and music if they want to; where everyone has some space to grow plants that are beautiful or healing or nourishing; where everyone has access to learning the skills they want to learn; where everyone can feel gratitude for this earth, for their community, for the abundance that surrounds them, and where nothing is wasted." *Rebekah Rice*

"Go out and find spiritual siblings in the Spirit and throw open your heart to them in trust and in love! And if you find them, treat them with great care, as this relationship may be one of the most precious ones you find in this life." *Peter Blood*

"Finally, the work of prophets is to make spirit available. This has to do with inspiration, with helping people to be freed from all that keeps us from fully living. Working prophetically means helping people find reasons for hope in places where hope seems absent. Prophets prepare people's hearts to welcome living water, to expect streams in the desert, to trust the swift sunrise we thought might never come. Prophets make plans for the field that will be planted when the exile is ended and we return home. And new hope is born just when there seems to be no room at the inn. In a world where so many of us are in captivity to cynicism and fear, those called to the work of prophets must make the daily choice to be prisoners of Hope. When we live in it, that deep Hope – the hope on the other side of despair – is contagious." *Noah Merrill*

"...open our eyes and our hearts to a world of possibilities. Take all of the things that you feel now and have felt this year and honor them, reflect on them; all of your thoughts, feelings, and experiences are real and they are valid. Siblings - we see you, we hear you, we love you, and we honor you. You are beautiful and you are all that you've ever needed; you just didn't know that yet. During a year that may have seemed like the end, remember that this is only the beginning. With community, you will never be alone." *Equality Florida LGBTQ+ Youth Leadership Council*

"Only wait to know that wherein God appears in thy heart, even the holy seed, the immortal seed of life; that that may be discerned, distinguished, and have scope in thee; that it may spring up in thy heart, and live in thee, and gather thee into itself, and leaven thee all over with its nature; that thou mayst be a new lump, and mayst walk before God, not in the oldness of thy own literal knowledge or apprehensions of things, but in newness of Spirit." *Isaac Pennington*

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Queries:

1. Do I have 'spiritual siblings' with whom I can share my authentic self – who are a 'leaven' to the 'new lump' I am becoming?
2. Whom have I known to do the work of prophets?
3. What kind of world do I want to live in? Where do I place limits on my thinking?
4. What kind of connections am I trying to foster with those who may share a similar view of moving beyond these uncertain times?