

## **SEYM Annual Gathering 2026**

### **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.

## Worship Sharing Fourth Day

“And I’ve learned something about grief: it can either hollow us out or clarify us. I do not want to become numb. I do not want to become conspiratorial. I do not want to drown in horror. I want to stay awake. I want enough of us awake that power begins to tremble. Because only when enough of us care—truly care—will something shift.” – Kat Armas

“You are not weak just because your heart feels so heavy.” – Andrea Gibson

“It’s not by accident that people talk of a state of confusion as not being able to see the wood for the trees, or of being out of the woods when some crisis is surmounted. It is a place of loss, confusion, terror and anger, a place where you can, like Dante, find yourself going down into Hell. But if it’s any comfort, the dark wood isn’t just that. It’s also a place of opportunity and adventure. It is the place in which fortunes can be reversed, hearts mended, hopes reborn.” – Amanda Craig

“Grounded grief is a vaccine against the morbid conditions bred by white supremacy, a patriarchy that has distorted our families and relationships, a concentration of wealth that has disconnected us from nature and directed everything brilliant and beautiful to profit. Only through the compassion and loneliness and love inherent in grief can we forge a world out of the fire that will not replicate ancient hierarchies.” – Malkia Devich-Cyril

“The Light...is a pillar of fire and a still, small voice.” – Leslie Manning

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### Queries

1. How do I stay awake amidst the attempts of this world to keep me complacent and compliant with evil?
2. In what ways can I find opportunities to mend brokenness and bring peace and healing amidst the “dark wood”?
3. How does integrity help me to recognize strength?
4. How can I forge something new in the fire of the “still, small voice”?

## Worship Sharing Fifth Day

The soul's deepest song  
emerges not from perfect harmony,  
but from those moments when we stand in  
the crossroads between comfort and courage,  
between darkness and dawn, between what is  
and what might be.

J.A. Santana

“Love has no opposite. Love is strong enough to hold all things, even your fears. Love is not afraid of your wrestle, your anger, or your disappointment. Love does not ask you to hide big mad or your questions or angst. Love is strong enough to withstand the ferocity of your heart's desert storms. Love knows those things are invitations to your evolution and transformation.” – Felicia Murrell

“Faith and hope are not about believing everything will be alright. They call us to our purpose: to love one another. They call us to constantly cultivate love in quiet ways through it all.... In turn, faith and hope promise us that no matter what happens, unexpected tangible support will arrive, joy and love will comfort us, and infallible guidance will lead us every step of the way.” – Judith Goedecke

“Friends come back from their worship with a new sense of ordination, but not the ordination of human hands. Something has happened in the stillness that makes the heart more tender, more sensitive, more shocked by evil, more dedicated to ideals of life, and more eager to push back the [veil] of darkness and to widen the area of light and love.” – Rufus Jones

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### Queries:

1. How can I become easy with my existence at “the crossroads between comfort and courage”?
2. How is love and authenticity relevant within my witness?
3. How do I hold steady the hopes and dreams that may only be realized in the distant future?
4. In what ways can the stillness of worship create space for me to “widen the area of light and love” so that I can more easily tender the world in which I live?

## Worship Sharing Sixth Day

“I want there to be a place in the world where people can engage in one another’s differences in a way that is redemptive, full of hope and possibility. Not this ‘In order to love you, I must make you something else’. That’s what domination is all about, that in order to be close to you, I must possess you, remake and recast you.” – bell hooks

“Hope can be a powerful force. Maybe there’s no actual magic in it, but when you know what you hope for most and hold it like a light within you, you can make things happen, almost like magic.” – Laini Taylor

“This older and much less common meaning [of hope] is about trusting life, without the expectation of attaining particular outcomes any time soon. This type of hope has a quiet but unshakeable faith in whatever happens and in the human capacity to respond to it constructively. It is a positive, but not necessarily optimistic, attitude to life that does not depend on external conditions or circumstances. . . [This] intrinsic hope is also that of God in everyone; the inner light; the quiet, still voice; and the experience of the Great Mystery.” – Kate Davies

“The very least you can do in your life is figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof.” – Barbara Kingsolver

“When our hearts are pierced...we’re not being injured, we’re being given the opportunity – it goes all the way through us; it isn’t stopped in our heart, it goes through and the Light pours through it. We become vessels; we become lanterns...we become beacons of hope – radiant gatherers and givers of Light. And we speak the Truth insofar as we are led and this is the danger not beyond it.” – Leslie Manning

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### Queries:

1. In what ways can I build a world wherein hope and possibility rather than fear and control are the foundations of my interactions?
2. How can I let go of my “expectation of attaining particular outcomes” to allow Spirit to work through me?
3. What gifts do I have or need to develop to help me grow into what is next?
4. How can I allow the Light to shine through my pierced heart so as to become a vessel of Hope to others?