

Gratitude

Dearly Beloveds,

We are pleased to share these highlights from our ministry of prayer and learning devoted to the School of the Spirit. The Spirit continues to be active and creative in this ministry for all.

A participant in this spring's Racine Contemplative Retreat spoke about a passage from Barbara Kingsolver in which she tells of re-teaching herself joy in a season of despair by focusing on a "single glorious thing—a flame of red geranium outside my bedroom window."

Retreatants connected this to Julian of Norwich seeing all of creation as a ball the size of a hazelnut in God's hand . . . and speculated that the specificity and wonder of contemplating deeply a microcosm of God's essence leads to Hope . . . which in turn transmutes to Joy as we linger in God's Presence.

We offer here a few specifics of our continued call to faithfulness to the School of the Spirit . . . in hopes that one or more might be such a microcosm that sparks Hope and Joy in you as they do in us.

Please support the School of the Spirit ministry today by sending a contribution in the enclosed envelope or by donating securely online through our website www.schoolofthespirit.org.

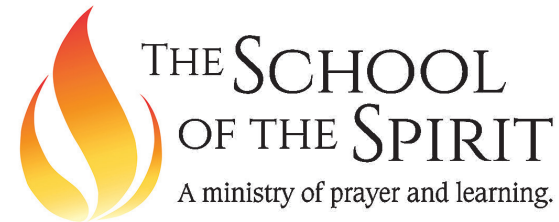
Thank you!

Joann Neuroth, Clerk
School of the Spirit Board

Hopes

- That God will choose an inaugural class for our new program, *Participating in God's Power*, which begins this fall.
- That the expanding *Contemplative Retreats* will continue to breathe with the breath of Spirit that has anchored the program through its lifetime.
- That the *On Being A Spiritual Nurturer's* 11th class will complete their residencies with fresh clarity about the work to which Spirit is calling them, with increased capacity for faithful response.
- That through dedicated work on our personal/individual and corporate racism, we as a ministry can transform so as to make The School of the Spirit, our programs, and our meetings radically inclusive blessed communities.
- That funding will be identified for a "field worker" to make our program offerings visible to those whom God seeks to call to deeper, more faithful service to Spirit.
- That people with the gifts we need for our expanded governance work will recognize God's call, even if they don't yet know they're meant to serve this ministry—and that we will have the vision, persistence, and courage to approach them.
- That all who have been touched and will be touched by this ministry continue to live faithful lives in service to the Living Presence which feeds us all.

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State of the Ministry

5th Month, 2019



The School of the Spirit Ministry serves
the Religious Society of Friends
throughout North America and is a 501(c)(3)
not-for-profit organization.

Call

New Board Member and Officer

We welcome Michael Wajda back to our board. Michael was FGC's associate director for development for 19 years and is a consultant in spiritual fundraising. He was a member of the 1991–92 *Spiritual Nurture* class. Michael served on the School of the Spirit board from 2004–2012; five of those years as board clerk.



Michael Wajda

We have an excellent replacement, Brad Shaw, for our long-serving, patient, and careful treasurer, Ray Treadway. Brad was raised a Friend in Fredonia, New York. He is a member, former clerk, and former treasurer of the Red Cedar Friends Meeting in Lansing, Michigan.



Brad Shaw

Connecting Our Community

The School of the Spirit Board has renewed our commitment to keep participants engaged and connected. Check your email mid-month for the latest news about SoS programs and events in our newsletter SNAPSHOTS.

In our new SNAPSHOTS column, "Reflections," we share our experiences of contemplative living. Reflections are short (250–500 words). Please submit a piece or encourage another SoS participant to write something. Send your prose, poetry, photo essay, etc. to reflections@schoolofthespirit.org.

On Being a Spiritual Nurturer

Five thematic streams flow through the content of our *On Being a Spiritual Nurturer's* 11th class:

- Practicing the Presence: Spiritual Development, Prayer, and Worship
- The Life of Faith within the Individual Spiritual Journey
- Quaker Theology
- Living within the Judeo-Christian Narrative: Corporate Spiritual Nurture
- Corporate Life in Faith.



Erika Fitz, Evelyn Jadin, Susan Kight

Among them, the teaching team has two masters degrees in divinity; plus experience as teachers, spiritual elders, and as a pastor.

The program has been restructured, its themes integrated to fit into six residencies over the course of eighteen months. Otherwise, its pattern of between residency study, followed by meetings for learning, koinonia groups, and worship would be familiar to previous *Spiritual Nurturer* participants. These components are designed to establish a contemplative rhythm that invites the participant into a deeper relationship with God.

Contemplative Retreats

- Linda Chidsey and Carolyn Moon, joined by facilitator mentees Sharon Frame and Jim Herr, offered "Dwelling Deep" at Powell House, Old Chatham, N.Y., January 18–21, 2019.
- Jan Blodgett, with facilitator mentees Rita Willett and Thais Carr, led "Opening to Grace" at Avila Retreat Center in Durham, N.C., April 4–7, 2019.
- Roger Hansen and April Allison, joined by mentee Sharon Frame, offered "Contemplation and Joy," their sixth retreat, at the Siena Retreat Center in Racine, Wisconsin, April 11–14, 2019.
- A new retreat location: April Allison and Sharon Frame will lead a retreat at the Weber Retreat and Conference Center in Adrian, Michigan, November 7–10, 2019. Jim Herr and Cindy Herr will be facilitator mentees.
- We hope to offer weekend retreats in additional locations in 2020. Several Friends have felt leadings to become facilitators and are being mentored within the retreats program.

All who have attended any School of the Spirit program were invited to a Spiritual Renewal Retreat, September 13–16, 2018, at the Franciscan Spiritual Center in Aston, Pennsylvania. Many thanks to Mary Linda McKinney, who organized the retreat.



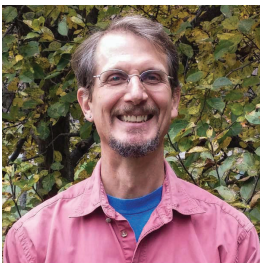
Our New Program! Participating in God's Power

A new course designed by Angela York Crane and Christopher Sammond begins in August 2019 under the care of the School of the Spirit Ministry.

In their words, "We are clear to offer this program as our faithful response to our experience of deep spiritual hunger and yearning among Friends, and to a world moving towards more and more dangerous levels



Angela York Crane



Christopher Sammond

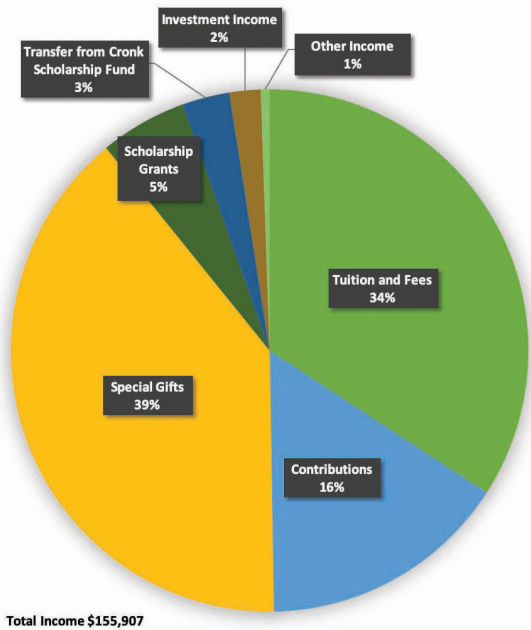
of intolerance, fear, hatred, and divisiveness. We believe that the Religious Society of Friends has a part to play in the development of the Body of Christ, in the Kingdom of God, and in the spiritual evolution of the human condition."

The year-long program will consist of four residencies on long weekends (August 2019 – September 2020), with video conferences between the residencies.

For more information or to register, see participateingod.com.

Finances

School of the Spirit Income, 2018



School of the Spirit Expenses, 2018

