Sixth Month: Religion, Study and Creativity

I read the Bible the same way that I listen to messages in meeting for worship: I start with the assumption that the message was inspired by the Spirit, but with the understanding that it may not be for me that day. So I read the Bible, listen for the voice of God, pay attention to what is for me at that time, and let go of anything that is not.
-Ashley Wilcox, 2012

Creativity has become a spiritual practice, and my spiritual practice has become the creative process. These have become one. My work is about preparing the ground and then receiving and amplifying what comes. There is a transformation for us spiritually as we receive it.
-Anna Fritz, 2016

Advices from Faith and Practice

The primary way of imparting our Quaker testimonies—the fruits of the Spirit—is by living and acting faithfully in our homes, Meetings, and communities. Friends have long recognized that education, particularly education that promotes spiritual growth, enhances the inward transforming experience. This brings us into closer harmony with the Spirit and enables us to live faithfully as Quakers. Friends hold that everyone has access to the Inner Light, and that all can benefit from education.

The creative impulse is part of being human, a gift from the Holy Spirit, and a way of finding a deep connection with our Creator. We acknowledge that the searching heart can express itself in many forms. Spirit-led creative activity is a path into the Light, not a distraction from or an obstruction to a centered life. Creativity can be a form of worship and witness, a ministry and a calling, a way of speaking out of the silence. Like other spiritual disciplines, creative expression carries the potential for spiritual transformation.

Queries

- How do we help to develop the spiritual lives of all of our members, attenders and children?
- How do we teach Quaker worship and discernment and their importance to the good order of our Meeting community?
- How do we share our deepest beliefs with our children and with one another? What influences among us tend to develop our religious life?
- Do we use our creative gifts to bring beauty, healing, and joy into others' lives and to reflect the glory of creation?
- Within our Meeting communities, do we recognize and encourage each other in the exercise of creative gifts?