

Worship Sharing 1/4/22

“...and Covenant: Spiritual Gifts and the Beloved Community”
Emily Provance, 2019

“My first Quaker meeting was totally silent, and this was exceptionally annoying because it meant that leaving meeting I knew nothing more than I did when I came. The second week, Rich Accetta-Evans stood up and said, “There is that of God in everyone.” I don’t doubt that he also said a whole bunch of other stuff—and I didn’t know enough then to name what he said as “vocal ministry”—but he said, “There is that of God in everyone,” and that was it; I knew I was home.

Nobody actually rushed about me clapping their hands, but the internal sensation was pretty close.

What I didn’t understand then—what I didn’t have language for—was that my longing wasn’t just to know that God talks to everybody. If that were all I needed, I never would have searched for a people at all. If the message is “God talks to everybody,” then all we have to do is listen to God, and that’s the beginning and the end of our journey. But it turns out, God is trickier than that. God is smarter than that. Yes, God talks to everybody, but God doesn’t tell everybody—or give everybody—exactly the same things. God gives me a piece, and you a piece, and that guy over there a piece, and expects us to learn how to play well together.

To share.

This is the beginning of covenant.

The best definition of covenant that I know is that we give ourselves to God and God, in turn, gives us to a group of people. And from there, we are expected to care for this group of people, and this group of people is expected to care for us, and as a whole we are expected to be obedient to the will of God. For some covenant communities, this means the will of God as written in a set of commandments, but in Quakerism, it means the will of God as constantly revealed. Continuing revelation. Figure it out as you go.”

Queries

How does this quote speak to your experience of finding Friends Meeting?

How does this quote speak to your experience of life within Friends community?

What is your experience of continuing revelation at Friends Meeting?

