

# *Friends of Silence Annual Appeal*

*October, 2020*

*Praise be to You!  
Praise the Beloved, O my soul!...*

*You lift up the faint-hearted,  
giving succor to those who weep.  
You watch over those on journey,  
sending guides and angels  
to lead the way;  
O, that we might become beacons  
of light  
to those in darkness.*

Nan Merrill, interpretation of Psalm 146  
in PSALMS FOR PRAYING

Dear Ones, Friends of Silence,

Our ministry --linked as we are in the Silence, in heart-prayer, and in friendship--has never been more needed. We and those around us--the ones close to us and the many we do not know--are experiencing the fearful rattling of nature and culture and much loss. It is no wonder that our hearts are fainting in sorrow. Yet we know in our bones that even in the upheaval and grievous darkness, something else is going on, something deep and fierce and glowing. The crisis of nature and pandemic illness, the chaos that is engulfing our world, can be understood as a full-throated call to discover the deep resources of the soul and the hidden possibilities for healing, both personal and universal, in each of us.

To answer that call, to not lose heart and to remain immensely brave and merciful in these times, we need succor for our grief and guidance on the journey. We need angels. We need the wise ones who appear on the modest four pages of the Friends of Silence Letter each month. You, our faithful readers recognize this. We are deeply touched by the many, many notes of appreciation we receive. Here are just two:

“I so appreciate that you have continued giving such essential support to many. Inspiration is great light during the darkness of so much unknown and change.”

“Thanks for your continuing inspiration...Especially in these times of feeling a desolation in our society, we need to recognize and appreciate the Light in the world. And observing the voice—still and small...”

*the letter continues on the back  
please turn the page over* 

We began the year reflecting on threshold: the luminous space, the deep breath, the interim before a new possibility takes shape. Threshold described where we were as Friends of Silence, on the verge of trying a new thing: to create the monthly Letter by each of us on staff taking a turn at it. We hope you enjoyed the different themes and voices, the brief reflections and the chosen quotes rising from what had stirred our own hearts and thoughts. Every one of the four of us have relished weaving the Letter for you month by month. Your prayers and notes of support have truly nourished us in this new endeavor.

No sooner had we started out than we and the whole human family fell out of the world. The need to go to soul ground, to reclaim the Silence where it is possible to hear the quiet voice of the One Nan Merrill called Beloved, had renewed resonance. All humanity had been given a call to “find a way back to ourselves”, as Bob so poignantly puts it in the introduction to this October Letter. Not only for ourselves, but so that we “might become beacons of light...”

When Nan Merrill started sending the simple letter of quotes to a handful of “friends of Silence” more than thirty years ago, her purpose was precisely the one so acutely needed in this moment: to encourage seekers and pray-ers and practitioners of Silence on the vital journey to being present and awake, so we live and act from a “deeper, steadier, and quieter place” (as Cynthia Bourgeault says in this issue of the Friends of Silence Letter). In that place, we become fully lit and able to add our unique spark to the lantern of soul glowing in the darkness.

This ministry of The Friends of Silence Letter is possible wholly through your contributions. Nan sent the Letter out freely to anyone who asked, first in Detroit, then in wider and wider circles. Now the Letter has grown to a mailing list of thousands around the world--and it is still free. We can keep printing and sending it because in return you send us your prayers, your appreciation, and your donations.

Please give what you can so that the Friends of Silence Letter may continue to come to your door and to the doors of all who ask for inspiration, and for guides and angels in these times.

With deep thanks,

*Lindsay*