

Poems of Witness: Living with Compassion in a Conflicted World

We must ourselves become the change that we wish to see in the world.

~ Mohandas Gandhi

The Quest for Peace and Justice Through Compassion, Creativity and Community

It is a challenge to find language in American culture that offers a humane and noble way of responding to seemingly intractable problems like injustice, economic disparity, environmental destruction. Media and political gamesmanship often focus on surface issues, controversy and divisive tactics to replace the listening, dialogue and self-reflection that encourage people to truly examine life, discuss issues, open to collaboration and create something new.

*From the place where we are right
Flowers will never grow
In the spring.*

~ Yehuda Amichai

Israeli poet

from *The Place Where We Are Right*

How can we learn and practice a language that helps us to bear witness to the real needs of the world? That process often includes the necessity of attending with care to our own wounds. It may include finding help through a connection to what Quakers call the “still small voice within” or in whatever sacred name and practice is true to your spiritual call.

How can we listen to one another (and within ourselves!) in a way that allows for honesty, deep trust, connection, compassion and playfulness?

Creativity offers a pathway. John Fox has worked in every area of the United States and in many other countries showing people, adult and children alike, how they can use their inherent creativity through writing to explore these questions. No experience with poetry is required!

*Truthfulness, honor, is not something which springs ablaze of itself,
it has to be created between people.*

~ Adrienne Rich

We will draw upon the power of poetry to build community, attend to wounds and reclaim a language of the heart. We may explore poems by Marge Piercy, Pablo Neruda, Langston Hughes, Lucille Clifton, Nazim Hikmet, Yehudi Amichai, Naomi Shihab Nye, William Stafford, Maya Angelou, Jimmy Santiago Baca, Thich Nhat Hanh, Mary TallMountain, young children from around the world and Denise Levertov, among others.

*But we have only begun
To love the earth.
We have only begun
To imagine the fullness of life.*

*How could we tire of hope?
– so much is in bud.*

~ Denise Levertov
from *Beginners*

We will explore how deepening a connection with this awareness empowers us to treasure differences and paradoxically, even mysteriously, stand together on common ground.



LOCATION OF ALL PROGRAMS

Heights Christian Church
17300 Van Aken Boulevard
Shaker Heights, Ohio

TIMES

Friday evening, April 13:
7:00 - 9:00 pm

Saturday, April 14:
10:00 am - 3:30 pm

Saturday evening, April 14:
7:00 - 8:30 pm

FEES

Friday evening: \$20

Saturday: \$45

Both events: \$60

Saturday evening: Free

All programs stand alone.
You can attend any one of
them or all three.

A light lunch will be served
on Saturday afternoon.

Saturday evening is a
program of celebration -
see next page.

See other side for details about registration and the Saturday evening event. ►

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER

Registration is available online at
<http://poemsofwitness.eventbrite.com/>

If you have questions or for more information,
please contact Heights Christian Church by calling
216-561-4800 or e-mail heightschristian@sbcglobal.net.

Your check may be made out to Heights Christian Church and
mailed to 17300 Van Aken Blvd., Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120.

Space is limited, so register early.

Deadline for Registration and Payment is Monday, April 9th.

Please indicate on memo line that this is for the
Poems of Witness Workshop.

A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE THROUGH THE ARTS, MUSIC, POETRY AND DANCE

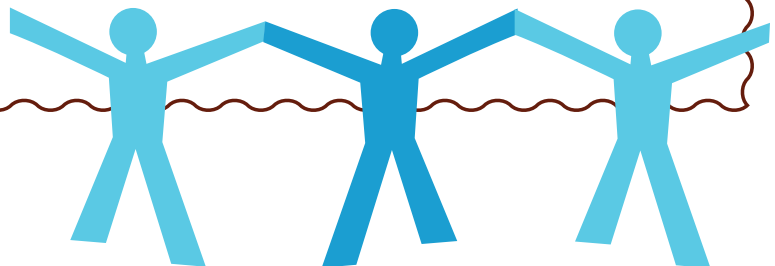
with internationally known poet therapist and author, John Fox.

**Please Join Us:
Heights Christian Church
Saturday, April 14
7:00 - 8:30 pm**

During his visit to Cleveland, John will be working with children in
4th grade at Fernway Elementary School on poems that reflect
upon peace and justice.

On Saturday evening some of these young people will join with
workshop participants and others attending to read their poems.
There will be music and dance. People will share through all the arts
ways to bring civility and compassion to a conflicted world. There
will be banners displayed, created by students from Shaker Heights
Schools.

One and all are welcome!



*What John Fox brings to this topic of poetry as
healer is potentially life-changing.*

~ Ralph Day
Cleveland, Ohio