

FFM Bulletin

Monthly Newsletter of the Framingham Friends Meeting

<https://ffmquakers.org/>

March 2026 Calendar

March 1	10:00 a.m.	Meeting for Worship and First Day School*
	11:45 a.m.	First First Discussion – Ministry and Counsel State of Society
March 4	9:30 a.m.	Coffee, Anyone?
March 8	10:00 a.m.	Meeting for Worship and First Day School*
	11:45 a.m.	Committee Meetings
March 11	9:30 a.m.	Coffee, Anyone?
March 13	7:30 p.m.	Latticework
March 15	10:00 a.m.	Meeting for Worship and First Day School*
	11:45 a.m.	Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business
		Annual Report – Fellowship, Recorder
March 18	9:30 a.m.	Coffee, Anyone?
March 19	3:00 p.m.	Chestnut Farms CSA Pickup
March 21	5:00 p.m.	Potluck dinner and Laura Keen talk about Kenya experience
March 22	10:00 a.m.	Meeting for Worship and First Day School*
	11:45 a.m.	Energy Committee presentation on feasibility of solar panels
March 25	9:30 a.m.	Coffee, Anyone?
March 27	7:30 p.m.	Latticework
March 29	10:00 a.m.	Meeting for Worship and First Day School*
	11:45 a.m.	Fifth First Discussion – Diego Low and Neighbor from CASA

(More information, including non-Meeting uses of the Meetinghouse, can be found on our website calendar.)

**Please note that FDS plans are flexible and may change from week to week. To be added to the FDS email list for updates, email Anne Anderson for current information.*

NEYM Events (see <https://neym.org/> for details)

March 10	Monthly Check-in for Friends Serving Their Local Meetings (Zoom)
March 12	End of Life Drop in Group (Zoom)
March 12	Alfie and Me Book Discussion Groups (week 1 of 6) Earthcare Ministry (Zoom)
March 14	Rev. Christina Rathbone, Author of “The Asylum Seekers” First Unitarian, Worcester
March 16	Introduction to Coping With Loss Groups (Zoom)
March 21	Extended Worship: Yielding to the Power of the Living Seed, Dover, NH
March 21	FWCC Section of the Americans Meeting (Zoom)
March 24	Monthly Check-in for Immigration Work Among Friends
March 27 - 29	Living Faith Move Up Retreat for Grades 5 to 7, Cumberland Foreside, ME
March 27 - 29	Living Faith Teen Retreat, Portland, ME
March 28	Living Faith Gathering, Cumberland Foreside, ME
March 31	Primitive Quakerism Revived, Tuesdays through April 28 (Zoom)

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“Some believe it is only great power that can hold evil in check, but that is not what I have found. It is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay. Small acts of kindness and love.” J.R.R. Tolkien

Please note the following volunteer assignments for March and April:

Date	Opener	Greeters	Fellowship	Hybrid Host
3/1/26	Neil Blanchard	Kit Potter	Lia Altshuler and Jim Houston	Chuck L.
3/8/26	Corbit Larson	Dave Baxter	Molly and John Branagan-Dee	Neil B.
3/15/26	Manzellas	Dave Baxter	Gerald Kimber White and Dave Baxter	Peter M.
3/22/26	Neil Blanchard	Louise Bendel	Kristin and Morgan Wilson	JR
3/29/26	Corbit Larson	Corbit Larson	Wendy Tompkins and Jim Klinkenberg	Richard L.
4/5/26	Manzellas	Lee Miller	Adam and Mary Hurley	Chuck L.
4/12/26	Neil Blanchard	Kit Potter	Jennifer Keen and Susan McAvoy	Neil B.
4/19/26	Corbit Larson	Stephen Nadel	Chris Wolff and Richard Lindo	Peter M.
4/26/26	Manzellas	Chuck Lidz	Lia Altshuler and Jim Houston	JR

Thank You!

Fellowship Committee

The Fellowship Committee is inviting you to support our community through providing fellowship after the close of Meeting. It is an important way you can participate in the life of the Meeting. Thank you in advance! If you CANNOT do this assigned date, please contact another member or attender from this list with whom you can switch dates. Please do not use FFM announce for this task but rather contact the person directly. ***If you have to make a change, once you have found someone who can provide fellowship on your assigned date, please notify Dave Baxter of the change.*** Otherwise, if all is well, just bring fellowship! Consult the Directory "Guidelines for Fellowship" for tasks involved-- though please note, we think preparing for 40 people is an accurate estimate. Thank you for supporting the life of the Meeting.

First First in March: State of Society Discussion

All are invited to this query-led discussion to help Framingham Friends reflect on the past year as a preliminary to our State of Society report, which will be submitted to the Yearly Meeting. Upcoming First and Fifth Firsts planned by Ministry and Counsel include: March 29 – Diego Low and a neighbor from CASA will speak to us on current conditions and work with our immigrant neighbors; May 3 – Marty Grundy will speak on the topic “How Do We As Friends Face the Empire?”; June 7 – Jen Newman will give us a preview of her Bible Half-Hour talk at Friends General Conference.

Condolences

Our deepest condolences to Susan, Larry, and John, siblings of our long-time member Lyn Weinberg. A Memorial Meeting and interment of ashes is being planned here at the Meetinghouse for Saturday, April 18.

First Day School Update

FDS continues its general theme this year of "How to find peace". We are learning some practices that people use to find peace: Amie shared her practice of yoga, Molly helped the children make God's Eyes, we learned to finger-knit. We put two beanbag chairs in the meeting room between the benches, and the children chose books, stuffed animals, and activities that they felt would be good for being in meeting for worship. We may add two additional "child-friendly" seating options. This is an experiment, and we are looking for feedback on how this is working for your family! Dungeons and Dragons continues for our older children, led by Adam. The younger children have Free Play on those weeks, supplemented by simple FDS programs suited for younger children.

For holidays, we celebrated Chinese New Year with traditional activities..

FDS could use a few more adults willing to spend one Sunday every month or two helping out with the children. We have some very young ones who need to be watched, held, or assisted with coloring, pasting, etc. We have regular volunteers for the first and second Sundays of each month but could use people willing to commit to the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays.

Contact Anne Anderson, FDS Coordinator, for more information or to be put on the mailing list for weekly updates on upcoming programs for FDS.

Friendly Fireside Feast Fotos!

Our community celebrated joyfully in the chill of winter with a lovely potluck in the Meeting room, with the fireplace warming our bodies and the good company warming our souls. We filled 6 long tables with at least 50 F/friends at this Outreach sponsored gathering.



Left to Right: Lee Miller opens the feast with silent worship; feasting F/friends; Eleanor enjoying the food and atmosphere

Life in Kenya!

Sasa unataka kusoma kuhusu utamadhuni ya Kenya? If you're curious about what this means and want to know more, come to Laura Keen's presentation on all things Kenya on **Saturday, March 21st from 5-8pm** at the Meetinghouse. It will be a potluck dinner and talk about what she has learned in the past two years in the Peace Corps, about Kenyan food, music, education, religion, and culture. All are welcome and hope to see you there!

Solar Panels Discussion

Join us to hear about the Energy Committee's exploration of the feasibility of solar panels for the Meetinghouse. March 22, starting at 11:45.

New Childcare Coordinator: Molly Branagan-Dee

In the February Meeting for Business, it was officially established that we now have a new childcare coordinator position, currently filled by me. Going forward I will be reaching out to adults with CORIs to see if they are available as childcare requests come in. As per Meeting policy, two adults need to be present with the children, so I will need plenty of volunteers!

What now?:

1. If you have a childcare request feel free to send me an email and let me know which events you would like to attend.
2. Are you an adult with a CORI? Look out for my emails and pick up childcare support when you can.
3. If you are an adult without a CORI, please consider getting one. This way you can help out our meeting community by providing childcare in the future.

A Reminder of Hybrid Meeting Etiquette

The following recommendations were developed based on a First First discussion of enhancing the experience of hybrid Meeting for Worship for all participants.

These recommendations are divided into 3 categories: 1. for Zoom attenders; 2. for attenders in the Meeting room; 3. for everyone.

For those attending Meeting for Worship via Zoom:

1. Please have your microphone muted before you join the Zoom meeting to prevent disturbing the gathering worship.
2. Please have your camera turned on or your name clearly displayed on your 'camera off' screen so that everyone knows who they are gathering with in worship.
3. Attend a Zoom Tech Help session for anyone who attends worship on Zoom to make sure you have basic Zoom skills, like how to mute and unmute yourself and how to use the settings to Pin a square or to change to Gallery view or Speaker view. If no such help session is available, ask someone on Ministry and Counsel to find a tech-experienced Friend to show you.

For those attending Meeting for Worship in the Meeting room:

1. If you are comfortable doing so, please sit in areas of the Meeting room that are on camera so that Friends on Zoom know who they are worshipping with. Members of Ministry and Counsel will mark the benches to indicate areas that are camera accessible.
2. If you are comfortable doing so, please remove your face mask when speaking in worship so that your message is intelligible to all participants.
3. If you are able, please stand up when speaking and please speak up.

For everyone:

1. Try to be in place in the Zoom room or the Meeting room prior to the start of worship at 10:00 to allow a few minutes to settle before worship begins. If you arrive late, please wait until 10:15 to join, in either format, to avoid disrupting worship with multiple entries.
2. Be aware that distracting behaviors on the Zoom screen are equally disruptive as distracting behaviors in the Meeting room. Treat wherever you are located as Sacred Space while we are worshipping together.
3. Consider taking time to prepare yourself for worship.

Congratulations!

In December, Jason Keen, son of Jennifer Keen, completed his bachelor's degree in Sport Management and Leadership at the University of New Hampshire, graduating summa cum laude.

Bond Sponsors Needed

Metrowest Worker Center/CASA is seeking people who can serve as bond sponsors for detainees who are trying to be released on bond from detention centers while their cases are pending. Detention centers are notoriously over-crowded and conditions in them are deteriorating as the current administration ramps up efforts to arrest thousands more immigrants daily. The role of bond sponsor is not one to take lightly, however the sponsor is not required to pay the actual bond. CASA will serve as obligor for the bond, supplementing whatever funds the family of the detained person can contribute. Please contact Melissa Foster for more information.

Greetings from a Peaceful Retreat

Chris Wolff offered this photo captured from her window at a recent retreat.



Out of Concern for Others:

- ❖ Please stay home if you are ill or have recently been exposed to Covid.
- ❖ Please wear a mask if you have any upper respiratory symptoms.

You can still join us via our hybrid Meeting for Worship available on Zoom. Contact worshipzoomffm@gmail.com to request the link.

Detained: An Account by Richard Lindo

Hidden behind the more public ICE surges in Minneapolis, Portland, Boston and other places, there is the casual cruelty of the “routine check-ins” that ICE requires of immigrants awaiting a hearing on their legal status in the US. These check-ins are routine only from the perspective of ICE; for the immigrants, they are the source of anxiety and fear because of what might happen.

D was in her early 20’s and from Ecuador. She’d been here 4 years with her husband having crossed the border and applied for asylum. She had been allowed entry pending a hearing on her asylum petition and had been given permission to work. Both she and her husband had hired an attorney to represent them in their quest to remain here. She had been advised by her attorney to follow up with an appointment with ICE headquarters in Burlington; she was told this would be routine although she had never before checked in with ICE. Perhaps she had previously checked in virtually with ICE and had not understood that she was doing so? The system is overwhelming and complicated especially if you don’t know the language.

On the drive to Burlington, she acknowledged she was nervous. The day before she told me that she had a hearing date the following June. I followed up on this and she then said she’d been confused; she did not have a hearing this June but had had one the previous June which she had missed because she had not been given the date by her attorney who was in the process of trying to have the hearing rescheduled. I began to feel more worried; this might not be a routine check-in. If she had indeed missed a hearing, a deportation order could have been issued by the judge. But then why would the attorney have advised her to go to a check-in without advising her of this risk? Or planning to accompany her? The facts seem to be all a muddle. It crossed my mind that perhaps she should not go to this check-in at all; but then it would likely have been worse for her.

We entered the ICE office, passed through the inspection, were confused by what she should do next since others seemed to be waiting in line at a “CART” machine. Eventually, a guard said that she did not need to use the machine but needed to fill out some paperwork and hand it in through the bullet-proof glass window. I helped her do this and then we waited. Meanwhile, other immigrants came and went; most were advised to return at some date in the future to go through the same process again. After an hour, she was called in by an officer who would not permit me to accompany her as I had no standing as either a family member or her attorney. After 20 minutes or so, she returned. She said they had taken down basic demographic information.

We continued the wait. The waiting room grew more crowded. It was a bitterly cold day and the room was drafty. An attorney accompanied by a woman with a bouquet of wilted carnations and a priest were there for a wedding. Attorneys lined up to provide or obtain information on their clients; sometimes these exchanges were routine, other times accompanied by friendly banter and once by an outburst from an attorney who vented “I hate this place; I hate these people.” Small requests required detailed paperwork which was rejected if not done properly. There was an understanding of where the power lay; the attorneys invariably would assure the officers that they understood that they were just doing their jobs; the attorney who vented apologized. Immigrants respectfully waited and were relieved when it appeared all was well and they could leave.

After two more hours of waiting, I asked one of the ICE officers about the wait. He said that he’d check on the status and returned to say that they were reviewing her case “upstairs.” This seemed ominous. No one else in the waiting room seemed to be facing the same situation. After another hour, I approached the officer again and asked if she should be concerned about being detained. He said “Well, everyone should be concerned who enters the country illegally”. I pointed out that she had applied for asylum and sat down.

A half hour later, they called her in. This time, there were two officers; I was not allowed in again because I had no status. So, I waited. After another half hour, one of the officers came out and said that she would be detained but not deported. He refused to give me details other than to say that once she was processed, she could speak to family members. He then cryptically observed that “under the guidelines of this administration” she had to be detained. Fortunately, I had asked D for the names and numbers of her husband and lawyer and immediately contacted her husband who in turn contacted the lawyer.

I left the building without D and did not see her again. The facts remain vague as to why she was detained and the ICE officer provided no clue. Later, I found out that, according to ICE, a deportation order had been issued against her at the border which seems odd since she had been allowed in and had been given work authorization. Was this a fabrication by ICE? My source suspects that it might be so.

D's husband was understandably alarmed and overwhelmed. The attorney had plans to try to see her at the ICE office in Burlington; I don't know if she ever did. What is clear is that D has now been transferred to a detention center in Adelanto, California, 3000 miles away from her husband and with no access to the attorney who had been managing her case.

So, this is the Kafkaesque nightmare that is the US immigration system these days. What was most disturbing about the whole experience was how mundane the cruelty was. People came and went, the officers went about their business, the attorneys went about theirs. Meanwhile, another migrant who had started the day as a free woman, who had been living and working innocently here in the hope that she would find refuge was detained, cut off from her husband, denied access to her attorney and swiftly transferred 3000 miles away to await her fate. Her crime: seeking refuge in the United States from violence. Now she is facing renewed violence here as her hopes and dreams for a better life have been dashed.

Trump may have succeeded in stopping migrants at the border. He has also succeeded in further sullyng the reputation this country once prided itself on as a safe harbor in a violent world.

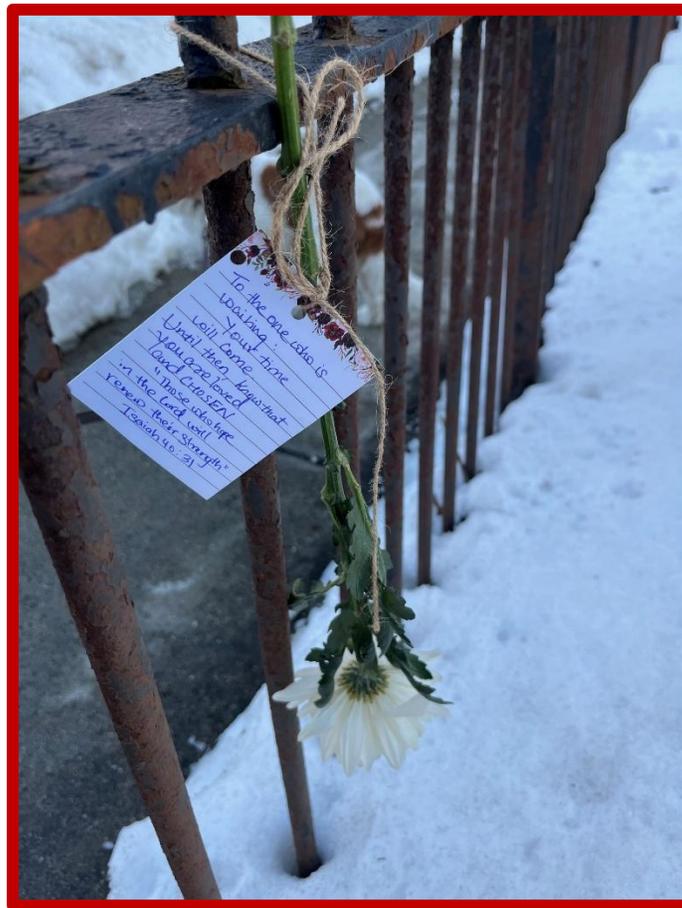


Photo by Trudy Schafer

**Framingham Friends Meeting
Minutes of the Meeting for Worship
with a Concern for Business
Second month, fifteenth day, 2026**

Friends at Framingham gathered in silent worship for a regularly scheduled hybrid Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business on Second month, fifteenth day, 2026. 26 members and attenders were present. Out of the silence, clerk Richard Lindo read the following advices which were considered in silence.

Query/Advice: With the change of leadership here in the US, many people are scared. They are facing threats to their security, their health, and their freedom and looking toward an uncertain future. They find themselves in “an ocean of darkness,” as George Fox wrote, though he also wrote that “an infinite ocean of light,” of God’s love, flowed over the ocean of darkness. Our faith does not tell us we will not face challenges, but that we can trust in the guidance of Spirit to show us how to love one another in ways that make a difference. ~ Maeve Sutherland

Worship

1. The Clerk asked for new items for the agenda. Lee Miller requested the addition of one item, and Friends approved the agenda.

2. Treasurer’s Report

Lee Miller read the Treasurer’s report for eleventh and twelfth month. All amounts rounded to the nearest dollar.

Twelfth month ending operating account balance	\$29,514
Operations income	\$2,797
Operations expenses	\$(2,175)
Net increase (decrease)	\$623
First month ending operating account balance	\$30,137
Restricted contributions	\$130
Non-operating income (expense)	\$58
Bequest Reserve	\$41,812
Capital Improvement Fund	\$3,640
Heat Pump Installation Reserve	\$0 - balance was moved to the
bequest reserve	
Total Cash Assets	\$75,589
Our operating account balance is about	\$16,816 greater than a year ago.
Ordinary contributions for the year to date are about	\$14,226 greater than a year ago.

Lee also provided an update on our costs for electricity.

Friends approved accepting the report.

3. Lee Miller read a letter accompanying a \$4,000 donation from former Meeting member Rachel Carey-Harper for the purpose of supporting individuals, programs, and projects addressing the challenges facing immigrants. It was proposed that the money be donated to Casa del Trabajador (Metrowest Worker Center).

Friends approved contributing this as a donation to MetroWest Worker Center.

4. Calendar Report

Richard Lindo presented the Calendar Coordinator's Report.

New requests needing approval:

March 7, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM - private event (Susan Woodrow)

March 26, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM - SVT Meeting (Michael Perrin)

A request was made to also approve the following event:

March 21, 5:00 - 8:00 PM - Potluck/presentation (Laura Keen)

Friends approved the requests, pending Elin's approval of the new event.

Upcoming Events not needing approval

Feb. 22 - Quaker Questions (Morgan and Lee)

Mar. 1 - State of Society Discussion (M&C)

Mar. 29 - Fifth First Discussion (Diego Low/M&C)

May 3 - First First Discussion (M&C)

May 13 - FICA Meeting (Richard Lindo)

Jun 7 - First First Discussion - Jen Newman of Beacon Hill Friends House

5. Melissa Foster presented the annual report on behalf of Ministry and Counsel. Our Meeting is thriving, particularly in comparison to the end of the pandemic. We welcomed three new members. Ministry and Counsel led a called meeting for discussion on First Day School concerns, many of which were acted upon. Two members of the committee have been leading a Quaker Questions discussion, which has been well attended. They supported meeting members in establishing Spiritual Listening and Inquiry groups and are offering a series of First First speakers. The Meeting approved the installation of placards prohibiting immigration enforcement at our Meeting. Currently, the committee is working on investigating assisted listening technology for the meeting room, as well as finding a way to provide childcare for meeting events.

There are two subcommittees under the care of Ministry and Counsel: the Working Group on Racism, which did not meet in 2025, and the Sister Meeting subcommittee. The report submitted for this subcommittee outlines various activities that took place in 2025, including hosting a fundraiser ahead of a delegation from Wellesley Friends Meeting and our Meeting traveling to Cuba. They also hosted Kirenia Criado Perez, pastor of Havana Meeting and Bible Half Hour speaker at NEYM Sessions. She attended a potluck at our Meeting and presented a slide show on the history of Friends in Cuba. She also spent time with Casa.

Friends approved accepting the report.

6. Melissa Foster presented a proposal for childcare coordinator. This would be a meeting service role under the care of the Operations Committee. This person would be responsible for finding CORI'd adults to provide childcare for Meeting activities. Molly Branagan-Dee has agreed to take on this role. Friends approved the proposal.

7. Susan McAvoy and Melissa Foster, on behalf of Peace Justice and Earthcare together with Ministry and Counsel, presented a letter to St. Susanna's Parish in Dedham. This letter expresses our support of the sign they placed in the manger of their nativity display in support of their immigrant parishioners. Friends approved with gratitude sending the letter.

8. Lee Miller presented the annual report on behalf of the Outreach Committee. The report notes that we have a number of newcomers attending on a regular basis, and that it's rare we don't have at least

one visitor on a given Sunday. Melissa Foster keeps our website updated and oriented more towards visitors than meeting members. There is regular traffic there, around 80-100 visitors each month. Once again, the committee participated in Framingham's "Find Your People" event, with an Open House event to follow up the next month. They also organized an "inreach" event - a Friendly Fireside Feast held in the meeting room. The Fellowship room is being kept fresh and updated. The Committee also keeps up the schedule of greeters. Friends approved accepting the report.

The Meeting closed with silent worship, purposing to meet again on Third month, fifteenth day, 2026.

Richard Lindo, presiding clerk

Kristin Wilson, recording clerk

Pray For Peace

by Ellen Bass

Pray to whomever you kneel down to:
Jesus nailed to his wooden or marble or plastic cross,
his suffering face bent to kiss you,
Buddha still under the Bo tree in scorching heat,
Adonai, Allah. Raise your arms to Mary
that she may lay her palm on our brows,
to Shekinah, Queen of Heaven and Earth,
to Inanna in her stripped descent.

Hawk or Wolf, or the Great Whale, Record Keeper
of time before, time now, time ahead, pray. Bow down
to terriers and shepherds and Siamese cats.
Fields of artichokes and elegant strawberries.

Pray to the bus driver who takes you to work,
pray on the bus, pray for everyone riding that bus
and for everyone riding buses all over the world.
If you haven't been on a bus in a long time,
climb the few steps, drop some silver, and pray.

Waiting in line for the movies, for the ATM,
for your latte and croissant, offer your plea.
Make your eating and drinking a supplication.
Make your slicing of carrots a holy act,
each translucent layer of the onion, a deeper prayer.

Make the brushing of your hair
a prayer, every strand its own voice
singing in the choir on your head.
As you wash your face, the water slipping



through your fingers, a prayer: water,
softest thing on earth, gentleness
that wears away rock.

Making love, of course, is already a prayer.
Skin and open mouths worshiping that skin,
the fragile case we are poured into,
each caress a season of peace.

If you're hungry, pray. If you're tired.

Pray to Gandhi and Dorothy Day.
Shakespeare. Sappho. Sojourner Truth.
Pray to the angels and the ghost of your grandfather.

When you walk to your car, to the mailbox,
to the video store, let each step
be a prayer that we all keep our legs,
that we do not blow off anyone else's legs.
Or crush their skulls.

And if you are riding on a bicycle
or a skateboard, in a wheelchair, each revolution
of the wheels a prayer that as the earth revolves
we will do less harm, less harm, less harm.

And as you work, typing with a new manicure,
a tiny palm tree painted on one pearlescent nail,
or delivering soda, or drawing good blood
into rubber-capped vials, writing on a blackboard
with yellow chalk, twirling pizzas, pray for peace.

With each breath in, take in the faith of those
who have believed when belief seemed foolish,
who persevered. With each breath out, cherish.

Pull weeds for peace, turn over in your sleep for peace,
feed the birds for peace, each shiny seed
that spills onto the earth another second of peace.
Wash your dishes, call your mother, drink wine.

Shovel leaves or snow or trash from your sidewalk.
Make a path. Fold a photo of a dead child
around your Visa card. Gnaw your crust
of prayer, scoop your prayer water from the gutter.
Mumble along like a crazy person, stumbling
your prayer through the streets.

