



# FNVW

Friends for a NonViolent World

## E-Letter

December 2025

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### Note From the Executive Director's Desk

*Entering 2026 with Gratitude, Purpose, and Hope!*

Dear Friends,

As we step into a new year, I want to pause and offer deep gratitude for the community that continues to sustain Friends for a NonViolent World.

2025 was a year of meaningful work, deep reflection, and steady progress for Friends for a NonViolent World. It was also a year of transition, and I know that transitions can raise questions and concerns. I want to reassure you that the heart of FNVW's mission remains strong, grounded, and hopeful.

Throughout November and December, AVP youth workshops continued at Vista 44 in Hopkins and within Minneapolis Public Schools, equipping young people with practical tools for conflict transformation and nonviolence. We remain deeply grateful to Hennepin County for their ongoing partnership and substantial support of AVP Youth programming, which has allowed this work to grow and reach more young people across our community. Looking ahead, AVP workshops at the Dakota County Jail are scheduled to begin on January 17, 2026.

The Holiday Fair, held once again at Minneapolis Friends Meeting, was a bright moment to close the year. Attendance, participation, and community spirit were strong, and we are thankful to everyone who planned, staffed, supported, and attended. The Fair remains a living expression of FNVW's Quaker-rooted commitment to peace, community, and justice.

You may be aware that we are making steady progress toward establishing AVP as an independent organization. This work is deliberate and careful by design. Our goal has always been to establish two strong, sustainable organizations, each capable of carrying forward complementary missions rooted in nonviolence. FNVW is intended to continue as a vehicle for Quaker direct social action and community peacebuilding, while AVP carries its long-standing work forward under a structure suited to its scale and reach. We encourage our community to remain supportive of both efforts as this transition unfolds.

As we reflect on the year, we also pause to remember those we lost in 2025. In February, we lost Lee Reinharz, whose life and witness were honored at her celebration of life in March. We also lost Bruce Hawkins, a beloved leader and longtime pillar of our AVP community, whose memorial brought together friends from across the world. More recently, we learned of the passing of Mary Arnel, a long-time AVP facilitator here in the Twin Cities. We will share details of her remembrance as they become available. We hold all of them in gratitude for the lives they lived and the peace they helped build.

As we move into 2026, I am filled with quiet confidence. The work continues. The partnerships are strong. The community remains engaged. Thank you for walking with us, for your trust, and for your continued support of FNVW and AVP as we carry this shared commitment to nonviolence forward.

With appreciation and hope, and with warm wishes for the new year,

**John Ewu, Ph.D.**  
Executive Director  
Friends for a NonViolent World

### Thank You for Making The Holiday Fair Special!



## HOLIDAY FAIR 2025

5 & 6 December

With deep gratitude, we want to thank everyone who helped make this year's Holiday Fair such a meaningful and joyful community gathering – our vendors, volunteers, and all who attended and supported the event.

To our vendors: **Dunlaoghaire Soaps, Doug Hostnick Pottery, Art by Tami, Lin Butler, Distributing Dissent, Mary Ann Andreason, Judy Kahm, Anita Hess, Madden Sisters, Fair Trade Minneapolis,** and others. Thank you for sharing your creativity, time, and beautiful work. Your presence helped create a space rooted in care, ethical values, and connection.

To our organizers, planners and stewards of the event, as well as the vital volunteers, we are so grateful for your generosity, energy, and behind-the-scenes work. From the weeks of planning, marketing, volunteering at the event itself and to everything else in between, this event would not have been possible without you.

And to everyone who attended, shopped, donated, and showed up in support or just to enjoy the food or music, thank you for being part of this community. Your participation directly supports our work for peacebuilding, nonviolence, and justice, and reminds us why these gatherings matter so much.

We are deeply thankful for each person who contributed in their own way, and we look forward to continuing this work together in the year ahead.

### Pastor Tom Gustafson Retiring from Messiah Lutheran Church

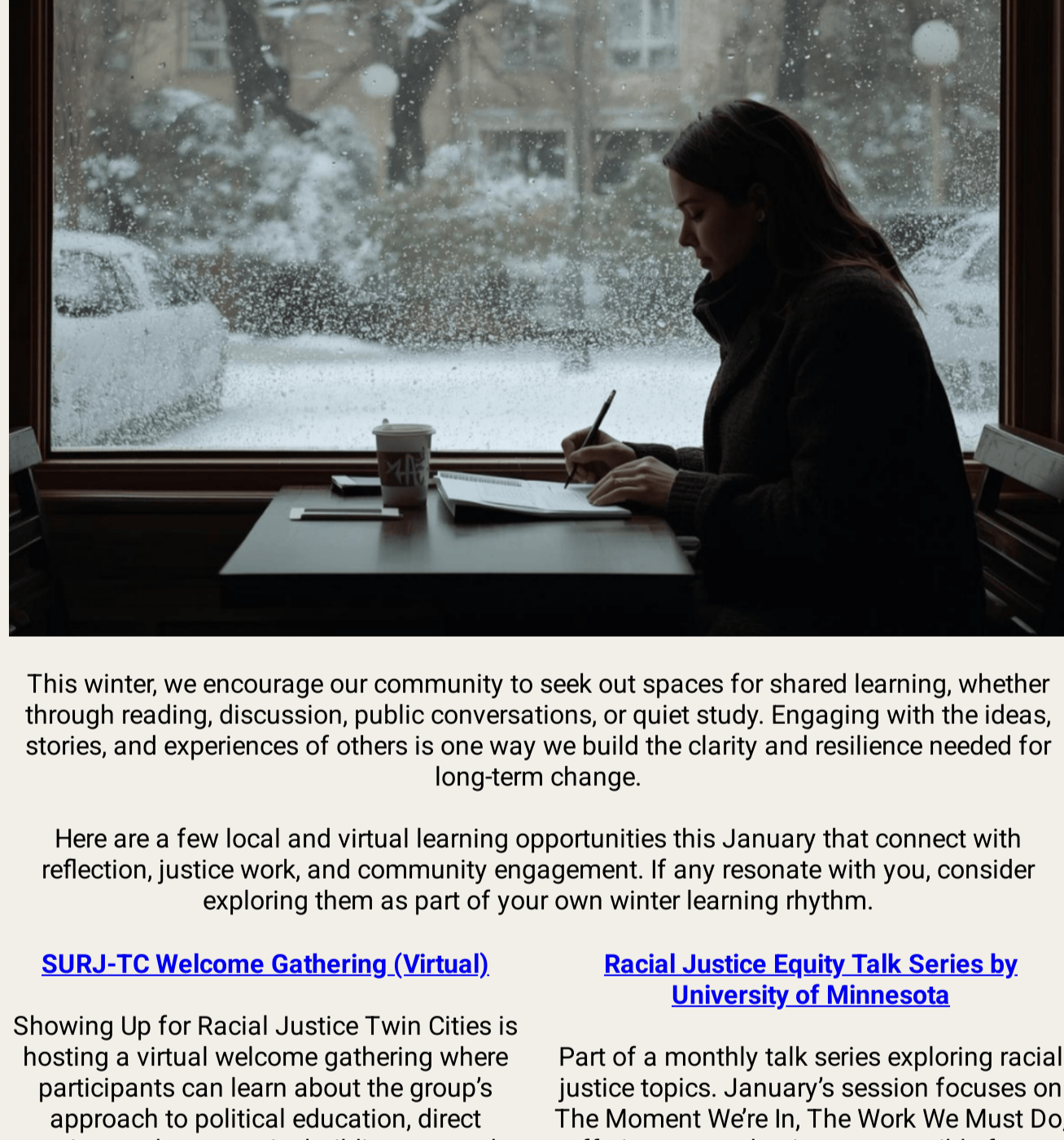


Pastor Tom Gustafson, an AVP facilitator, recently retired as Pastor of Messiah Lutheran Church after nearly 40 years of service. He has no intention of retiring from pastoring and is looking into a variety of part-time ventures, both locally and otherwise.

In addition, Tom is eager to continue serving as an AVP facilitator. He was instrumental in providing space for AVP to conduct workshops at the Center for Changing Lives, and he introduced his congregation to the benefits of AVP. As a result, a good number of Messiah youth and adults have taken part in AVP workshops since then.

We want to thank Tom for his advocacy and leadership, and look forward to him continuing to serve as an AVP facilitator.

### Upcoming Opportunities for Education & Dialogue



This winter, we encourage our community to seek out spaces for shared learning, whether through reading, discussion, public conversations, or quiet study. Engaging with the ideas, stories, and experiences of others is one way we build the clarity and resilience needed for long-term change.

Here are a few local and virtual learning opportunities this January that connect with reflection, justice work, and community engagement. If any resonate with you, consider exploring them as part of your own winter learning rhythm.

#### [SURJ-TC Welcome Gathering \(Virtual\)](#)

Showing Up for Racial Justice Twin Cities is hosting a virtual welcome gathering where participants can learn about the group's approach to political education, direct action, and community building - a good entry point for folks new to organizing.

**Tuesday, January 13**  
**7 pm to 8:30 pm**

#### [Racial Justice Talk Series by University of Minnesota](#)

Part of a monthly talk series exploring racial justice topics. January's session focuses on The Moment We're In, The Work We Must Do, offering an academic yet accessible forum for reflection and discussion.

**Tuesday, January 27**  
**4:00 pm to 5:00 pm**

#### [National Day of Racial Healing in Bloomington](#)

The City of Bloomington's National Day of Racial Healing event brings people together for shared learning, storytelling, and interactive conversation designed to strengthen relationships and build community across difference. It focuses on dialogue and connection rooted in equity and understanding, which is a good fit for readers interested in justice work.

**Tuesday, January 20**  
**6 pm to 8 pm**

#### [Quarterly Racial Justice Gathering](#)

Hosted by the Minneapolis Area Synod's Racial Justice Team, this community gathering is a space for collective conversation about racial justice efforts locally and connecting across faith-based and civic communities.

**Tuesday, January 27**  
**6:30 pm to 8:00 pm**

#### [Dismantling White Saviorism: Knowing Your Role in Anti-Racism, Equity & Inclusion](#)

A virtual workshop focused on anti-racism practice, equity, and understanding white positionality in justice work. It's designed to be reflective and interactive, helping participants move from intention to action in their communities.

**Wednesday, January 21**  
**9:30 am to 12:30 pm**

#### [Power Building for Racial Equity \(Virtual Workshop\)](#)

This virtual workshop focuses on practical strategies for confronting power dynamics and advancing racial equity in organizations and community spaces. It's designed for people working in nonprofits, movements, or community groups who want to deepen their understanding of how power shapes systems and how equity can be strengthened through intentional practice.

**Thursday, January 29**  
**11 am to 5:30 pm**

#### [Faith in Minnesota: Race, Class, & Gender Narrative Training](#)

Faith in Minnesota offers a virtual Race Class Gender Narrative training. This is an organizing and communication workshop for understanding how narrative shapes movements and policy campaigns.

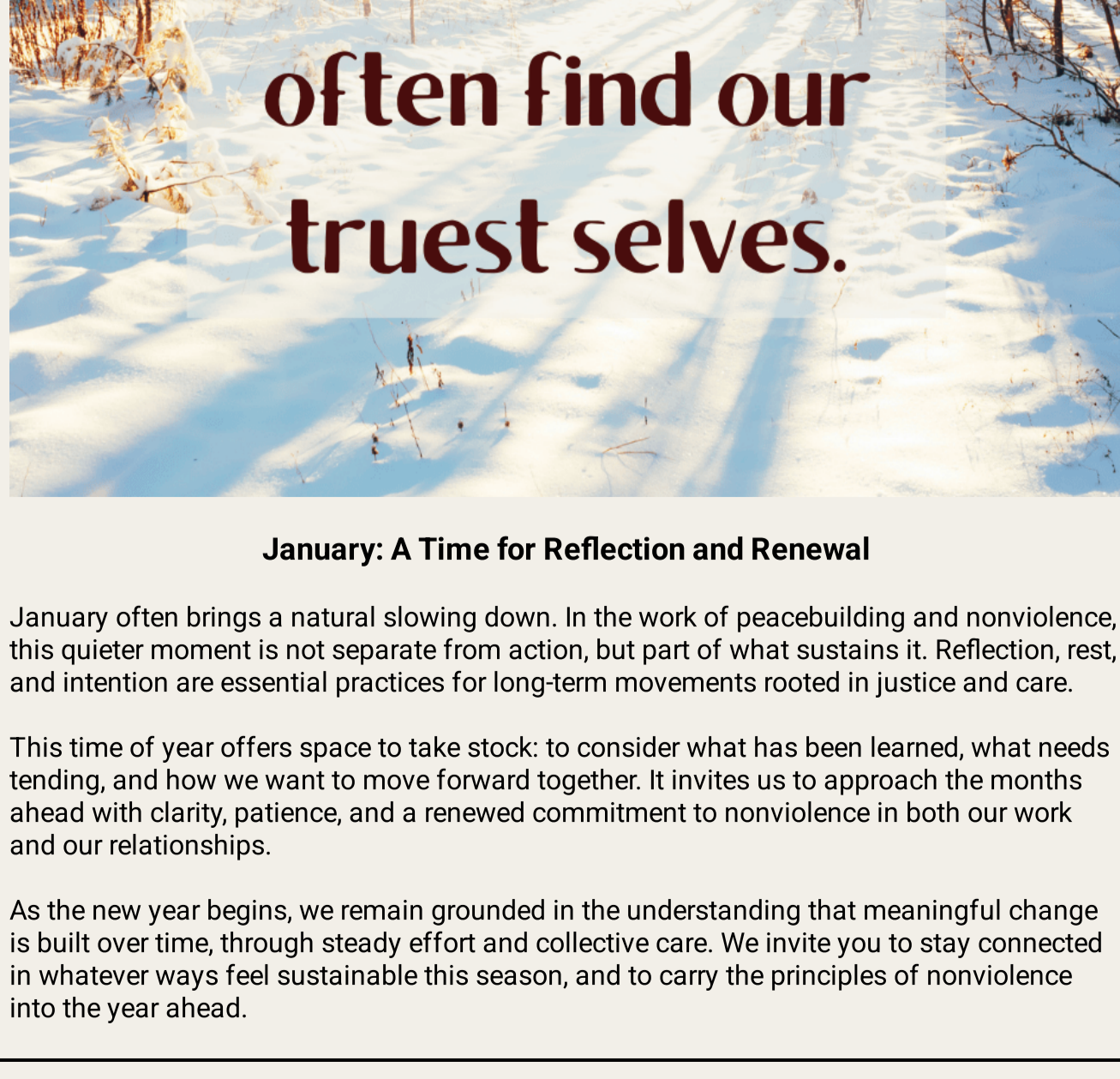
**Wednesday, January 21**  
**6:15 pm to 8 pm**

#### [Visit the Minnesota African American Heritage Museum & Gallery in January](#)

The museum reopens January 6 with free admission and ongoing exhibitions highlighting African American history, culture, and resilience in Minnesota, such as *Unbreakable: Celebrating the Resilience of African Americans in Minnesota*.

**Month of January**

### Reflection Prompt for January



#### January: A Time for Reflection and Renewal

January often brings a natural slowing down. In the work of peacebuilding and nonviolence, this quieter moment is not separate from action, but part of what sustains it. Reflection, rest, and intention are essential practices for long-term movements rooted in justice and care.

This time of year offers space to take stock: to consider what has been learned, what needs tending, and how we want to move forward together. It invites us to approach the months ahead with clarity, patience, and a renewed commitment to nonviolence in both our work and our relationships.

As the new year begins, we remain grounded in the understanding that meaningful change is built over time, through steady effort and collective care. We invite you to stay connected in whatever ways feel sustainable this season, and to carry the principles of nonviolence into the year ahead.

FNVW works to promote and create peace and justice in our community by using the principles and practices of nonviolence to transform conflict and to address the root causes of violence. Your financial support will help us move our mission forward into the future!

Donate Today to Support Nonviolence!



Check out our full website [here](#) for more information!